



Return to the Regent's

heritage lottery bid 2002



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setting the scene

Introduction

Preface

The package of documents attached, entitled 'Return to the Regent's' provides supplementary information to accompany the Heritage Lottery Fund application forms submitted by British Waterways London.

It incorporates information about the Regent's Canal and its heritage significance; describes the aims and objectives of the bid, describing the proposals in some detail; and includes a delivery programme and delivery mechanism.

For convenience the summary sheet provides an overview of the project aims and objectives; a description of the proposals and lists the key supporting organisations of the bid.

A letter of support from the chairperson of the Friends of the Regent's Canal is also attached to illustrate the value and support that local interest groups and organisations give to the proposed bid.

London's Canal Network

London's canal network was created in the early 1800's as the most efficient and cost effective way to transport a vast range of materials from the industrial Midlands to London and to carry imports from London's docks to other areas of the country. However, by the end of the 19th century with the spread of the railways and subsequently motorways the use of canals went into decline.



More recently canals have undergone somewhat of a renaissance, not so much for commercial load carrying – although this is now being explored and developed in a modern context – but as an attractive and accessible recreational resource to enjoy in a wide variety of ways, whether on a boat or from the waterside.

It is now also recognised that canals have a very important role to play in the regeneration of the cities through which they pass. Canals contribute to the quality of life of local communities, add value to their economic and environmental development, and provide a valuable amenity for local people and visitors to enjoy.

Quote from 'Waterways for Tomorrow' June 2000 :

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"The waterways contribute to the renaissance of our inner cities; they enhance residential developments; they offer important environmental and educational benefits; and they have continuing scope for transporting freight. Taken together with the ever-growing leisure market ... the prospects are exciting."

*Rt. Hon John Prescott MP,
Deputy Prime Minister and the
then Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the
Regions.*



British Waterways

British Waterways was established by the Transport Act 1962 to manage the inland waterways, docks and estates which had previously been the responsibility of the British Transport Commission. Once considered of little value, this has since proved to be a rich inheritance indeed, comprising a 2000 mile (3219 km) network of 200 year old buildings, structures and landscapes, with a unique history, communities and wildlife habitats.

British Waterways' Mission Statement:

"Our business is to manage the inland waterways system for the increasing benefit of the United Kingdom. We aim to provide a safe and high quality environment for users, staff and local communities. We take a commercial approach and strive for excellence in every aspect of our work. The heritage and environment of our waterways will be conserved,

improved and made to work well for future generations.”

British Waterways is a public corporation responsible to the Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).



British Waterways is contracted by government to ensure that navigation channels remain open and in a safe and well-maintained state. The organisation's role has broadened to one of stimulating new and innovative improvements for the benefit of all.

British Waterways London

British Waterways London (BWL) (see plan) is responsible for over 90 miles of navigable rivers and canals in London. Since 1997 BWL have also been responsible for 110 acres of London's Dockland waterspaces.

The Rivers Lee and Stort Navigations from Hertford and Bishop's Stortford in the east run down to the

Thames at Limehouse via the Limehouse Cut.

Across Central London, through the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington, Camden and City of Westminster, the Regent's Canal links Limehouse to Little Venice.

Westwards from Paddington Basin the Paddington Arm of the Grand Union Canal joins the main line of the Grand Union Canal at Bull's Bridge. Here the canal links both to the Thames again at Brentford, and north to Uxbridge, where it runs to Slough via the Slough Arm and continues north to the Midlands as part of

Britain's 2000 mile network of navigable inland waterways.

There is enormous potential for the waterways to play a vital role in the regeneration of the Capital, as well as in delivering social, environmental and transport improvements and British Waterways London is already working hard to deliver these.

British Waterways London has been working closely with a number of partners in London, in particular as lead partner in London's Waterway Partnership, to develop the potential of London's waterways as a catalyst for regeneration. An essential element of these partnership initiatives is achieving a balance between the heritage perspective and the role of canals as a vital part of 21st century London life.

Over the past 2-3 years the Regent's Canal has become a particular focus of attention for British Waterways London, London's Waterway Partnership and others taking an interest in London's canals. Four particular initiatives reflect this recent interest and provide a context for making this Heritage Lottery Fund bid entitled "Return to the Regents".



Related Initiatives

London's Waterway Partnership

London's Waterway Partnership is a London-wide strategic alliance of the public and private sector led by British Waterways London. It was established in 1996 and centres on 50 miles of canal and river corridor north of the Thames.



The Partnership's shared vision is that London's waterway network becomes a focus for economic and environmental regeneration, linking centres of vibrant commercial activity with areas of urban tranquillity and open space, building on the existence of a rich and varied working waterway heritage.

Tourism Strategy for London's waterways.

London's waterway network is a unique asset, providing a peaceful counterpoint to the hustle of the city. Within minutes of some of the busiest parts of the capital, visitors to the waterways can experience the natural environment as well as gain a sense of the industrial heritage that created them. The waterways can provide places for a range of active pursuits or for a leisurely stroll along the towpath where there is always something of interest to see.

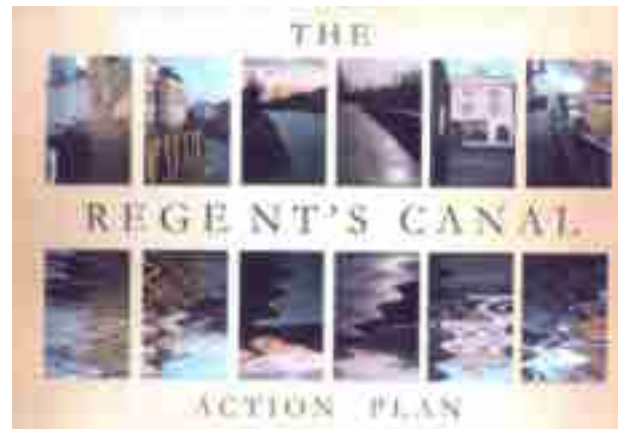
Vision Statement for Tourism Strategy – *To put London's Waterways on the tourist's map of things to see. By raising their profile and increasing the number of tourism visits the unique characteristics of the canal*

will release their full potential for economic and social benefit.

Regent's Canal Action Plan

The Regent's Canal Action Plan was produced in June 2000 by British Waterways Conservation and Regeneration Team for British Waterways London. It combines a strategic overview and action plan for local improvements for the Regent's Canal, which passes through the varied physical and social environments of 5 London Boroughs – Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington, Camden and City of Westminster – from Limehouse to Little Venice – 8½ miles in length and within 3 miles of the City of London.

The Action Plan recognises the value that the canal can bring to the regeneration of these areas and its contribution to the quality of life of local communities.



setting the scene

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The Plan was prepared as a result of widespread consultation and input from groups such as the Friends of Regent's Canal, local residents, businesses, local authorities and other canal users. It was guided by the work of London's Waterway Partnership Community Project Managers who also use the Action Plan as a framework for local consultation.

Three key themes have emerged: *access for all; safety; enhancing the visitor experience.*

Underlying these themes was the importance of the environment and heritage of the canal.

The Action Plan is being used at a local level by various agencies, as well as British Waterways London, to engage with local community groups and organisations to raise awareness about the canal and provide a focus for implementing improvements for safe access and enjoyment.

A number of initiatives have now developed where local people are taking an active role in canal improvement projects. These include art, sculpture, trails, drama and re-constructions, landscaping, cleaning-up and graffiti removal as well as adopt-a-canal projects.

"Exploring the Regent's Canal" Education Pack

The rich heritage and wildlife of the Regent's Canal is a valuable education resource for over 200 primary schools in the boroughs through which the canal runs.

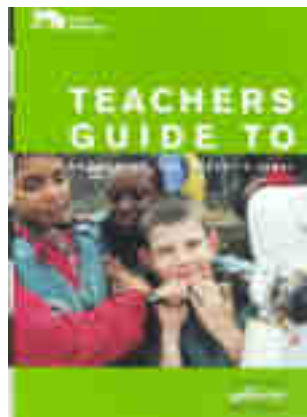
The aim of the Exploring the Regent's Canal Education

Pack is to make the canal accessible for teachers when planning their curriculum work and to help young people develop an understanding of the canal which will encourage them to respect and care for it.

Exploring the Regent's Canal helps to teach aspects of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum including history, geography, science and citizenship. It brings to life the importance of the canal in the past, includes information and activities about the canal environment today and considers social and cultural issues by examining the future of the canal.

The pack consists of activity sheets, a teachers' guide and resource sheets. The activity sheets cover why and how the canal was built, its role as an important

transport route, the lives of the boat people, wildlife and biodiversity and looking after the canal today and in the future. The teachers' guide includes comprehensive background information and clear guidance on being safe near the water. The resource sheets consist of archive photos, maps, illustrations of the wildlife and accounts from people who grew up near the canal.



Whilst the Education Pack focuses on the canal as a

resource for teachers and students, this HLF bid targets all visitors to the canal whether young or old, local residents or visitors from further afield, from this country or abroad. It also targets people that may live and work on the canal or enjoy it for recreation either by boat or from the towpath.

Key issues to address

A number of issues have been identified whilst carrying out the initiatives referred to above and in the research associated with the preparation of this bid. These have specific implications for the aims, objectives, and proposals which are described later in this document.

These issues can be summarised as follows:

- People are not generally aware of the heritage interest of the Regent's Canal and often not even aware that the canal is there to be enjoyed.
- Vandalism, graffiti and other anti-social behaviour deters people from using the canal. Personal safety is a concern for many people using the canal.
- There is a need to create a sense of pride and/or ownership of the Regent's Canal by local communities to help to protect and conserve its heritage interest and value for future generations to enjoy.

- Interpretative provision where existing is old, poor, inappropriate, out of date, patchy, and vandalised adding to a feeling of neglect and even threat to personal safety.

The main aims guiding the HLF bid – 'Return to the Regent's' reflect a concern for the issues identified above.



Aims and Objectives

setting the scene

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Main aims of the project:

to develop a wider appreciation and enjoyment of the Regent's Canal heritage

to stimulate an interest in the Regent's Canal by local communities, giving a sense of pride, value and ownership

to help protect the environment of the canal, providing a safer and more enjoyable experience

to assist the conservation of the Regent's Canal heritage for future generations

Specific objectives to enable the above aims to be achieved are:

The development and provision of a package of interpretative initiatives which encourage people to discover, explore and experience the heritage of the Regent's Canal in an enjoyable, informative and innovative way.

The provision of a legacy as a result of the project which adds to the educational value, knowledge and accessibility of the Regent's Canal for future generations to use and enjoy.

Complementary initiatives

A number of initiatives are taking place at key locations along the Regent's Canal which will contribute to achieving these aims and improve visitors' enjoyment and experience of the Regent's Canal. These include access for all improvements, towpath re-surfacing, creation of "Windows on the Waterway"; removal of "hidden" corners, graffiti removal and landscaping and habitat improvement.

These works are being undertaken in conjunction with local authorities, Crime Prevention Design Advisers, the Fieldfare Trust, the GLA, Thames 21, Friends of Regents Canal, Groundwork Trust, Regents Park, London Zoo, local community groups and others to achieve lasting improvements which will add value to the Regent's Canal and its heritage features.

Support for the bid



British Waterways London



London Borough of Camden



City of Westminster



London Borough of Islington



London Borough of Hackney



London Borough of Tower Hamlets



London Canal Museum



Groundwork Camden and Islington



Groundwork Hackney



London's Waterway Partnership



London Canals Committee



Inland Waterways Association



Mile End Park Partnership



London Zoo



Lea Rivers Trust



Friends of Regent's Canal

Heritage Significance

setting the scene

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Heritage Significance of the Regent's Canal

The Regent's Canal has a regional and national significance. It is the only canal to be located entirely within a 3 mile radius of the City of London, so is not only urban in nature but also bears the legacy of the development of England's great capital city.

Due to the topography, the canal is built into a deep cutting often with large buildings or parks flanking its edges which gives it a degree of protection from the traffic at street level. On entering the towpath the reduction in noise is significant and the presence of parks, foliage and aquatic wildlife add to the feeling of tranquillity, contrasting with the busy urban surroundings. Whilst seeing many changes, the canal retains much of its nineteenth century character so contributes to the feeling of seclusion from the rest of London.

The key features of interest of the Regent's Canal can be summarised as:

At city scale:

Urban / capital city context – *the canal benefits and contributes to the working of the capital city. This is evident in the diversity of land use along its banks.*
Views to City of London – *the Regent's is almost unique in Britain by having the capital city as a backdrop.*

Diverse social history – *from celebrities at Gainsborough studios to Mrs Smith the 'knocker up' at Limehouse.*

At street scale:

Eclectic architectural nature – *from Regency through to modern in style*

Wide variety of bridges – *road, foot and rail, from listed to new, from brick to concrete*

Distinctive double locks and cottages – *consistent along the entire stretch*

Islington Tunnel – *more than half a mile long – a feat of engineering in its day*

Deep retaining walls – *due to topographical and social reasons, the canal was set into a deep cutting.*

Basins, wharves and warehouses – *a large collection of industrial buildings.*

Parks and 'green corridor' – *from Regent's park to the new Mile End ecology park*

At human scale:

Iron railings – *along the towpath boundary*

Original paddle gear – *used in the locks*

Kings Cross stop lock – *remains of device used to protect the railway during the war*

Horse ramps – *for horses that pulled barges to get out after falling in the canal*

Rope marks – *on the bridges caused by ropes rubbing as the horses passed by*

Bollards and canal 'furniture' – *for tying boats and winches for lifting goods*

Wildlife heritage – *aquatic animals, birds and emergent planting*

Some of these features are explained in more detail later.

The Canal's Historic Role in the Development of London

The canal's role in the development of London was not only to provide transport, but also assist industrial growth and social change. It was used to transport the everyday goods needed to sustain the world's largest metropolis:

"The advantages of such a canal to the public are incalculable, but amongst the most prominent is the supplying of the north side of the metropolis, for an extent of five miles, with water carriage. It will be another Thames at the back of the northern parts of the town, affording the like advantages of commerce and communications, as the River Thames itself". (The Prospectus, 8th August 1811)



At the time the canal was constructed London was already the largest city in the world and expanding daily. The canal was central in the transportation of essential services for this ever increasing population. Coal, timber, ice, hay and manure were carried. To accommodate this trade wharves and basins had to be constructed many of which are still found today. Carlo Gattis Ice Wells for example were located at Battlebridge Basin. Of particular interest are the stone, brick and slate wharves necessary for a rapidly expanding city including, Thornhill Wharf, Gervers Stone and Marble Basin and St. Marylebone Slate Yard. Much of the surrounding area was constructed with bricks which were carried by boat from the Medway towns via the Regent's Canal.

The canal was associated with many important industries in London. These ranged in size from the huge Imperial Gas Works at Kings Cross, and generating stations to piano makers and pewter's. The London Hydraulic Power Company had their first station at Limehouse built by the Canal Company.

The canal is intrinsically linked with the social development of the city. London Zoo is bisected by the canal with many of its listed animal houses adjacent to the canal. Many schools are found adjacent to the Regent's including the Ragged School one of the last surviving Barnardo's Homes in London. Several workhouses were located adjacent to the canal (now demolished). Sites along the canal corridor are named after landowners who sold their land to the canal company ie. Thornhill Bridge. This provides a unique link with London's pre-industrial past.

Features of Significance

Architecture

The Regent's Canal is a text book of architectural styles and building methods in London over the previous two centuries. Almost uniquely for British canals, it is predominantly characterised by polite architecture rather than the canal vernacular. These buildings and bridges give variety, vitality and visual interest along its corridor. Although a fantastic mixture of styles is found the buildings have great historic and cultural unity. London stock bricks are the predominant building material, characteristic of much of 19th century London. Of particular architectural importance are:

Stuccoed facades of villas around Little Venice,
Nuffield Lodge and Hangover Lodge in Regent's Park,
London Zoo including the Snowdon Aviary,
Vincent Terrace,
Gilbey's Warehouse and Pirate Castle at Camden,
Fife Terrace,
Sutton's Wharf with its overhanging jetty,



The great gas holders at St. Pancras and Johnson's Lock,
Ragged School Museum,
Great Northern stable block and coal office at Kings Cross,
Canal toll offices at Lisson Grove, Limehouse and Little Venice,
Lock cottages and stables including lean to's which housed back-pumping gear.

Rail and Road Bridges

The canal has an eclectic mixture of bridge types, many of which are listed including 36 road bridges, 9 foot bridges and 10 railway bridges. The significance of the heritage value that these bridges lend to the character of the canal is high. Some display wonderful architectural detailing such as the bridge over the disused arm to Cumberland Basin at Gloucester Gate, the Roving Bridge at Hampstead Road Locks and Bonner Hall Bridge and gate posts leading into Victoria Park. Others include early examples in the use of cast iron.

Many of the bridges have a colourful history such as Macclesfield Bridge which was blown to pieces by a barge containing explosives as it passed underneath. Rebuilt, it is known to this day as 'blow-up' bridge. A few bridges contain plaques or crests such as Warwick Avenue Bridge.

The most interesting feature of many bridges are the remains of earlier bridges underneath the more recent structure. Many are found along the entire length of



the canal including Fitzroy Bridge, Whitmore Bridge and Thornhill Bridge. Whilst most later additions sit directly on top of the earlier structure some modern bridges are entirely separate structures leaving the original underneath. Here the remains of the original are reminiscent of an archaeological site. Euston Rail Bridge retains the original 1837 stone abutments by Robert Stephenson. Many of the original canal roving bridges dating from the pre-urban era can therefore still be found, albeit incorporated into more modern structures.

Rope Marks

An interesting and well preserved feature to many of

the bridges are rope groove marks to brick and stone abutments. These date from the era when boats were hauled by horses. They have survived on many bridges and are often cut into the fabric of the bridge itself. Alternately iron rope guards were placed to protect the stone or brick abutments, many of which survive. Good examples include Haggerston Bridge, New North Road Bridge, Hampstead Road Bridge, Bonner Hall Road Bridge and Hampstead Road Bridge. At Hampstead Road the roving bridge has groove marks to the iron hand rail. Some bollards also have rope marks, a good example of which is located at Kentish Road Lock.

Horse Ramps

Horse ramps are a characteristic feature of the regent's canal, but are relatively unusual within the canal system as a whole. They are ramps running out of the canal to the towpath to enable horses which had accidentally fallen into the water (often frightened by the rumble of trains passing overhead) to get out again. Few are in an original form above the water, but once the canal user is aware of their use they are easy to spot. Approximately 20 are found today, however the Railway Proposals Map of 1882 locates at least 10 which have now been lost.

Mileposts and Boundary Markers

Several are located along the corridor including parish boundary markers, commemorative plaques and distance markers. These are found at Regent's Park, Cumberland Basin, Sturts Lock, Kingsland Road Bridge and Mile End.

Brick and Stone Retaining Walls

Many early examples of brick and stone retaining walls are found abutting the towpath and the canal. Of particular interest are walls to former wharves to the south side of the canal some of which display interesting patterns of bricks and stones. Suffolk Wharf, the area adjacent to North Road Bridge, Bangor Wharf and Commercial Wharf must all be noted. The wall on the opposite bank to the Ragged School contains the remains of pillars to a covered wharf, which was used for the unloading of coal for the Gas, Coke and Light Company.

Stop Locks

The threat of bombs during the Second World War necessitated the construction of a pair of stop locks at Kings Cross in order to protect the railway underneath. Each night these were shut to minimise the devastation that would have been caused had a bomb hit the canal. In addition stop locks are located at Little Venice, Camley Street and at the junction with the Hertford Union.

Bollards and Canal 'furniture'

There are many types of bollards found along the canal however, five principal bollard types can be identified. Bollards are more than often found in groups especially on the approaches to locks. In addition other features associated with the canal are found such as the iron winch at Hampstead Road Locks.

Locks

The canal suffered a shortage of water for working the locks. The original Act prohibited the use of water from the Grand Junction Canal. In response an experimental lock involving water filled caissons was designed by William Congreve. This was built and tested at Camden but later abandoned as unworkable. 120 acres of Finchley Common was purchased for the purpose of forming a head of water to feed the canal via a nine mile feeder. It was soon realised however that this was only sufficient to supply enough water for two lock-fulls a day. A plan to supply water from the Thames at Chelsea was also abandoned as the water was considered too filthy.

In 1835 the Company acquired the concession from the Grand Junction Canal to dam the River Brent to create the Brent Reservoir (known today as the Welsh Harp) in Hendon. In an attempt to save this precious supply of water locks were constructed in pairs with interconnecting sluices between two chambers so that they worked together - like side ponds. The paddle was raised by means of a rack and pinion on a post between the locks. These double locks are an important feature contributing to the unique character of the Regent's Canal. Several still retain important original features including the original central rack and pinion at Johnson's Lock and large granite coping stones. Today only one lock in each pair is operational with the other forming a weir.

Preserved in several locations are the remains of the back pumping scheme which pumped water from the

Thames to Kentish Town Lock. At Commercial Road Bridge a pipe is found crossing the canal which carried the water. To the north of the bridge is an iron inspection cover and control valve. Pumps stood in small lean to's adjacent to lock keepers cottages at Mile End Lock, Old Ford Lock, Sturts Lock, St. Pancras Lock and Kentish Town Lock. Some of these lean to's are found today.

Other Characteristics

The corridor has many splendid mature trees and landscaping. It also runs adjacent to three important London parks (Regent's, Victoria and Mile End), in addition to many much smaller landscaped spaces. Seating and litter bins often display iron work indicating the Regent's or the appropriate London Borough and in some places early surface treatments including cobbles are found.

In certain locations 'sound' is an interesting characteristic. The contrast between absolute quiet (broken only by bird song and the sound of culverted water entering the canal) in certain stretches with the noise of urban London in others is stunning. At the majority of locks one of the pair has been converted into a weir. Here the sound of water cascading into the



lower section is particularly appealing.

Social History

As well as revealing two hundred years of engineered and built structures to the visitor, the canal, less obviously, harbours a varied social history and associations with communities and individuals.



The latter includes those who lived around and worked on the canal as well as more prominent figures of society.

Bringing these different themes together, involving communities in relating their social history to a wider audience is fundamental to encouraging re-engagement with the canal, preserving the 'essence' of the canal experience and attracting more people to spend time on the canal.

The social history of the Regent's Canal is an equally important aspect of the canal's heritage. Often overlooked, it is rich as a source of local history. This gives a greater 'time depth' to those areas through which the canal passes than just the canal. This is most evident in the legacy of street and place names. For instance Battlebridge Basin inherits its name from the battle fought between the Celtic Queen Bodicea and the Roman Army.

As well as people famous through history, the canal's existence generated livelihoods for many working

Londoners. Carlo Gatti's ice-cream business prompted the transporting of ice along the canal. Icemen delivered ice to surrounding shops and businesses. There were also canalside power stations and hydraulic pumping stations, that operated the curtain lifting mechanisms in the west end theatres.



The canal, principally by location has a long association with famous people and events particularly the history of television, music and the cinema including Gainsborough Studios, TV-AM, Planet 24, Abbey Road and the Holborn Studios.

The Ragged School Museum has an excellent public exhibition on the social history of the East End that includes the Regent's Canal. Local people have contributed their own anecdotes to give an insight into how people used to live and the background to the communities that existed close to the canal.

Archive Research

To date a comprehensive archive, document and map search has been completed. This has principally involved locating different sources and documenting what type of material is held where. If appropriate, documents have been copied and used as a base document for the successful completion of the

photographic record. The archive section at BW is the primary archive office for most sources. In addition the British Library, local record offices, Public Record Office and canal museums hold records. Many local amenity groups also have information and have produced some useful interpretation documents. A comprehensive set of maps has however been gathered. These date from the pre-canal age to present including 1st and 2nd series Ordnance Survey. Of particular relevance are the 1882 Board of Works Maps held at the London Metropolitan Archives. These represent a corridor study of the Regent's proposing a change of use to railway.

Archive search includes:
 BW Heritage Register
 BW Architectural Heritage Survey
 BW - WCR Archives
 BW Archives - Gloucester (450 entries)
 BW London Office Records
 Public Record Office
 British Library Map Section
 English Heritage Library
 London Canal Museum
 Stoke Bruerne Museum

A photographic study from Little Venice to Limehouse has been completed, with 400 photographs of all principle features which give the canal its character. This has primarily focused on heritage sites such as bridges, basins, horse ramps, parks and wharves. Each photograph has been plotted on a map and any relevant information recorded alongside. From this it has been possible to find certain themes which are distinctive to

the Regent's Canal and which recur along its length – horse ramps for instance. It was also possible to identify characteristics of certain stretches of the route, for instance whether they were industrial, residential or recreational in nature.





project proposals

Part One - Interpretation Focus Points

project proposals

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Proposal

This element involves the creation of 'Interpretation focus points' at certain bridges and features of interest along the canal to highlight the feature, provide a place to pause and learn about the canal story. This will be achieved by fitting interpretation plaques with new seating nearby at intervals along the towpath. There are fifteen bridges and fifteen features of interest proposed as Interpretation Focus Points which are discussed in more detail in the appendices.

The plaques will be of high quality durable materials with a '3D' profile to enhance legibility. Seating will be in the unique Regent's Canal design, to match the successful existing benches.

The plaques will be sensitively and professionally designed to complement the features they are describing and Conservation Area / Listed Building approvals will be sought where necessary.

Part of the project will involve removing existing out of date and damaged interpretative signage and seating.

Background

Extensive background research was carried out by British Waterways which identified the features or characteristics of interest along the canal and their local or national significance. Signage and archive audits were carried out to discover the extent of existing interpretative information on site and held elsewhere. All this information was brought together showing that

there was a wealth of interesting features along the canal with very little explanation or opportunities to stop and think. It also showed that much of the existing signage was old, damaged, and inconsistent in style. Residential areas like Hackney and Tower Hamlets were badly lacking in interpretative opportunities compared with the areas more favoured by tourists like Camden and Westminster.

Project aims and objectives

The project aims to improve understanding and appreciation of the canal, the era in which it was built and how it has changed through the years. This will increase learning and enjoyment on the canal. It aims to provide lasting on-site interpretation which may stand alone for the benefit of the one-off visitor or be an instigator for further learning and interest by local communities, which is supported by other British Waterways initiatives for instance the Education Pack. The plaques will provide a consistent image throughout



the canal's length, which will promote the fact that the canal is owned and cared for. Highlighting the features or sites of significance will protect them from insensitive development and thoughtless repairs, assisting their conservation for future generations.

The signs will contain some basic orientation information for instance where the access points at the bridges lead to, which will improve visitor well-being and safety and help to turn the towpath into a useful route, not just a leisurely stroll.

Signs will be fitted along the entire stretch of the canal to benefit local communities e.g. in Hackney and Tower Hamlets not just the areas popular with tourists. Care will be taken in the design of the plaques to appeal to a variety of ages and backgrounds.

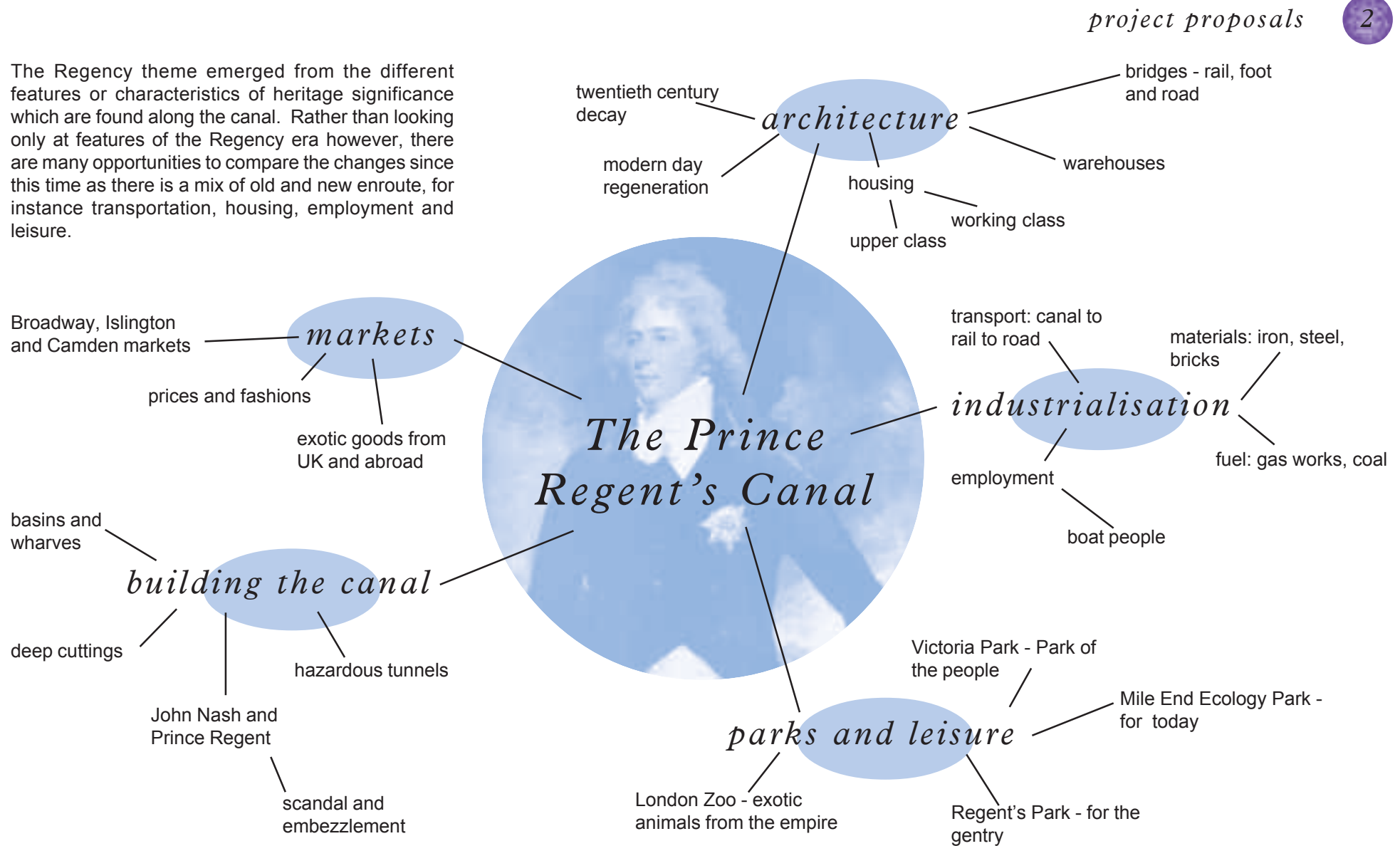
Theme

A Regency theme developed as it was during the Prince Regent's time that the canal was built in and owes its name to and there is a great legacy of this along the route. Yet there have also been many physical and social changes on the canal since this time which provides a chance to compare and contrast.

From this the Regent's Canal Story developed which would be told through the series of Interpretation Focus Points.

The Regent's Canal Story is told later in the document.

The Regency theme emerged from the different features or characteristics of heritage significance which are found along the canal. Rather than looking only at features of the Regency era however, there are many opportunities to compare the changes since this time as there is a mix of old and new enroute, for instance transportation, housing, employment and leisure.



Part Two - Live Interpretation and Legacy

project proposals

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Proposal

Live interpretation

A programme of live interpretation will be developed with local groups, animating the canal's history through the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

There will be four parts in total. For the first three, visitors will journey along a different stretch of the canal in a narrow boat, guided by one of three central characters from the Regent's Canal's history. As they travel, they will see and hear scenes from the past acted out by players along the route interacting with the central character, illustrating their life, work and experiences. The final performance will happen at a single location. It will include the three main characters from the previous stories, creating greater depth to their individual stories and how they are related.

Each event will stand alone as a complete and individual performance, with reference to the other characters and stories. Any visitor who goes to more than one performance can feel the chronology of the townscape and story build up through their experience and will want to see more.

Three potential characters have been identified; their lives spanning a hundred years:

- i) A foreman on the Regents Canal, c 1815. Possibly James Morgan, Nash's assistant responsible for engineering during the construction of the canal.
- ii) The merchant, Carlo Gatti, c 1850. A successful

Italian immigrant and purveyor of ice-cream to the gentry. His former factory is now the London Canal Museum.

iii) An Edwardian nanny, c 1910. From one of the very grand regency houses. Her employer is a famous architect so she is more knowledgeable than others in her position. Her great-grandmother was in service as a cook in the same household.

Legacy

Any act of living interpretation is, by its very nature, ephemeral. Once performances have finished there



is little evidence of what has taken place, except for the emotional experience of the audience and participants and changes in their behaviour, perception and attitudes.

A permanent and lasting legacy of the project will be created, which can be enjoyed by all into the future. Video, audio and photographic records will be made throughout the project by participants. They will learn and develop the necessary skills at workshops during the project and create a DVD and a CD-ROM detailing both the process and the final product. These will be available to schools and groups involved with the project, can be played at future events and at the London Canal Museum. They will also be available on the British Waterways' and London Canal Museum's web-sites. The collection of photographs would be displayed in a touring exhibition, which would visit schools, community centres and local galleries. The DVD and CD-ROM may also be used in to compliment existing educational resources.



Background

Different people will react to and learn from different forms of interpretation. Live interpretation provides an exciting alternative which is accessible to a wide range

of visitors and is something many people may not have experienced. People like to learn in a sociable context and like to be entertained as they learn. The experience can provide a greater depth of understanding too. Individuals feel safer as part of a group and organised group activities provide an opportunity for people to do things and visit places they may previously have lacked the confidence to do.

Project Aims and Objectives

This element will provide an opportunity for people to learn about and understand the history of the Regent's Canal through the lives of people who lived and worked



along it. The living history will illustrate links to the Interpretation Focal Points, scenes will be enacted at these points providing the visiting audience the opportunity to see the relationships between the social heritage of the canal and the physical environment. The interpretative plaques may also include quotations by characters in the performance re-enforcing the links between people and place.

Local communities, who participate in the project, will gain an understanding of the heritage significance and how the lives of people living with the canal have changed. Stimulating an interest in the Regent's Canal by local communities and visitors will lead to a greater sense of pride, value and ownership. People will experience a fun, unusual, interactive and sociable experience.

Education

Many aspects of this project will be used to support delivery of the National Curriculum in local schools and will fit well with ongoing work promoting the Regent's Canal as an education resource. Specific areas of study include History - Victorians, Local History Study; Geography - Environmental Change and Local Area Study and Citizenship - Responsibility for the Environment. Due to the 'hands-on' nature of this project, pupils will directly involved in developing such skills as interpreting historical evidence as well as important language skills such as speaking, listening and communication.'

Themes

Different themes will be illustrated and explored by the characters in each story. Some of these are equally relevant today as they were during the development of the Regent's Canal.



Industrialisation and the building of the canals will be explored through the first act by the foreman. Themes of immigration, social mobility and trade will be addressed by the Italian ice cream producer in the second performance. The third central character will illustrate social change over the last hundred years and the changes and developments in technology, housing, empire and the monarchy.

The process

Three phases of the project will run from May 2002 – September 2003.

Phase 1 will begin with a launch at Canalway Cavalcade in May 2002, the first major canal side event of the year. Partnerships will be established, within the local community, of groups who would like to be involved in developing the project. These will include schools, after school clubs, community centres, community theatre groups, youth clubs & the Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes throughout the five London Boroughs through which the canal runs.

A database of people visiting the canal and who are interested in the project will be created. Newsletters, created by participating groups, updating and promoting the project will be distributed. Details of how these people use and perceive the canal will also be captured and used during the evaluation process at the end of the project to assess how perceptions and attitudes to the canal have changed.



Phase 2. (July 02 – April 03) Professional enactors and interpreters will be recruited and begin researching characters, roles, chronologies and locations in conjunction with groups identified in Phase 1. Workshops will be run on topics including interpretative performance, audience engagement and script writing and groups will assist in researching, developing and promoting the project.

Phase 3 is the programme of performances which will take place through the summer of 2003. The programme of four acts will be repeated and run over a period of seven or eight months from the first of the year's major canal side events, in April or May to the last in September.



implementation plan

Programme, Costs and Funding

Project Programme

The programme for carrying out the project is shown on the bar chart below. Its intended launch in May 2002 will be marked by promotional activities at the Cavalcade festival at Little Venice. The fitting of Interpretation Focus Points (plaques and seating) and the Live Interpretation will commence at Cavalcade in May 2003. The legacy documents will be produced in parallel with the Live Interpretation.

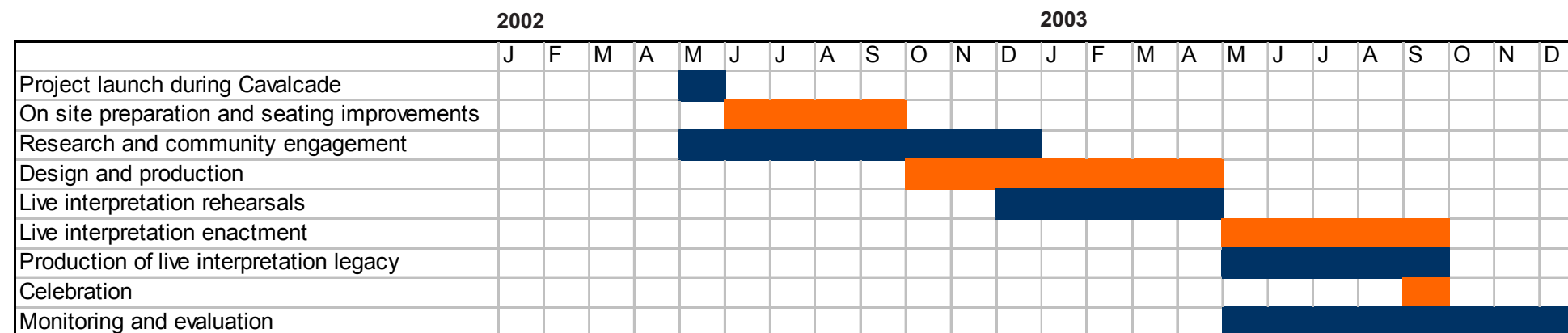
The final enactment of the live interpretation in September 2003 will be marked by a celebration of the projects achievements and will be followed by intensive monitoring and evaluation. During this time, the HLF bid project team will be looking to maintain the momentum by investigating the opportunities for further initiatives and projects to follow on.

Cost Breakdown

Interpretation Focus Points	£ 45,000
Live Interpretation	£ 45,000
Project Delivery	£ 10,000
TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	£100,000

Funding

Proportion of costs to be match funded by British Waterways	50 %
Proportion sought by bid	50 %
TOTAL FUNDING SOUGHT BY BID	£ 50,000



Meeting HLF Criteria

Importance to the heritage

The Regent's canal is the only canal to be located entirely within a 3 mile radius of the City of London. It is a truly urban canal.

The canal played a pivotal role in the development of London. It was central in the transportation of essential services including coal, timber, ice, hay and manure for the rapidly increasing population. Many of the



wharves that were built to handle this trade can still be seen today. These activities have also left very individual marks on the landscape, for example rope marks left on bridges and bollards from the era when boats were drawn by horses.

In addition many sites along the canal take their name from landowners who sold their land to the canal company. This provides a clear link to the past uses and individuals who have played a key role in the development of London.

The canal corridor is home to many important heritage features that chart the life of the canal's history. There is an eclectic mix of bridges, locks, cottages, and wharves in addition to the varied 18th, 19th and 20th century London architecture that can be seen from the canal.

This project seeks to draw visitor's attention to these features and give them a flavour of the history of the canal, whilst securing the canal's future as a sustainable modern day recreational attraction.

The attached section on heritage significance explains the value of the canal to Britain's heritage in more detail and highlights other key features of the Canal and it's environs.

Conservation benefits

By increasing the quantity and quality of visits to the Regent's Canal, this project will ensure public interest in and support for the Canal's future which will contribute to ensuring it's continued conservation.

Installation of new seating, in the Regency style will contribute to uniformity along the canal and complement its heritage significance.



The new interpretative and orientation signage will be sensitively designed to enhance the canal landscape in keeping with its character, with the design itself contributing to the interpretation.

Access benefits

One of the key aims of this project is to improve ease



of physical access to and from the canal by improving the current orientation signage along the canal. This will make it far easier to use the canal as a sustainable transport route, thus encouraging more people to use the canal everyday. Installing more seating will also increase access by enabling people with limited mobility to rest more frequently.



The heritage significance document and the British Waterways' Design Manual will guide the design to ensure that the signage does not detract from but enhances the special Regent's Canal environment.

Details in the appendix demonstrate British Waterways' approach to improving access to the historic canal system and our partnership with the Fieldfare Trust to improve access for the visually and physically impaired. This project is known as *Waterways Access for All*.

The project includes interpretation facilities and activities that will improve intellectual access to the heritage of the canal. A variety of interpretation techniques will be used to maximise audiences. Where the project uses the internet to increase access the design will meet the RNIB guidelines for visually impaired users.

Additional public and community benefits

British Waterways has consulted widely with the local community in the development of this project and will continue to involve them in researching and designing the interpretation activities. This will enable people to learn about the canal's history and make links with their own lives.

By improving access and interpretation this project will enable the canal to be used more effectively by schools and other local groups. The Regent's Canal Education Pack and programme will be supported and enhanced by this project.

By improving access to and awareness of the canal, this project will enhance the recreational potential of the canal for walking, cycling, bird watching and boating for both local residents and tourists.



The project will also contribute to the tourist economy of the canal, which is particularly important at this time as London's tourist industry struggles to recover from the effects of the Foot and Mouth crisis and September 11th.

Quality of design

British Waterways will seek to ensure that the Regent's Canal project is carried out to the highest standards and meets all internal and external legislative requirements. British Waterways has assembled a core team of staff to manage the delivery of this project drawing on our heritage, interpretation, design and recreational expertise.

Financial need and viability

The total cost of this project is £100,000. Further details of the breakdown are shown in the appendix of the bid application. British Waterways and many of our partners in the area have contributed time and financial

resources to the development of this project, and we are now dependent upon external match funding to enable the project to be implemented.

All external procurement will be according to British Waterways procurement policy to ensure best value is achieved.

British Waterways will be responsible for the long-term management of the physical outputs of the project after the project period.

Strengths of the organisation

British Waterways has extensive experience of designing and implementing projects to improve physical and intellectual access to the canal network. Some of these have received HLF funding, including the successful Working Boats project in the West Midlands.

British Waterways is a large organisation with a proven track record in managing financial and human resources. It has management structures and professional expertise in place to lead projects of this nature as well as a competent workforce and sufficient, stable financial resources to maintain and progress them.

British Waterways operates in accordance with its policies on Health and Safety and Sustainability.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Evaluation of project promotion

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation by the project management team will ensure that the project achieves its aims and objectives and runs to forecast budget and timetable.

The Project Management Team will meet regularly to review progress and react as necessary.

Quantitative Evaluation

In order to measure the outputs of the project and its management, the following methods will be used:

- Measuring progress against forecast timeframe and targets: The Project Manager will monitor practical progress on all elements of the project against the agreed output targets and timeframe;
- Performance against budgetary targets: Financial monitoring will be undertaken by the Regional Finance Department on a monthly basis to enable the Project Manager to evaluate expenditure against projections;
- Attendance at events: Numbers of people attending events will be counted, including the launch at Canalway Cavalcade, and all performances and will be compared against target figures. Return visitors will also be recorded as a measure of the success of events and performances in increasing awareness and

usage of the canal environs.

- Before and after photographic evidence of the canal environment.
- Increased usage of the canal towpath: There are pedestrian counters at five locations: Little Venice, Camden, Islington, Mile End, Limehouse Basin, which were installed in August 2001. By August 2002 we will have cumulative data for 1 year on visitor numbers and this will be used as the baseline for measuring increased usage.
- Participants will be surveyed to measure the numbers attending from target catchment areas which will be compared with predicted figures.

Evaluation of promotion project

Attendees will be asked where and how they found out about project/enactment to assess effectiveness of marketing and promotion eg, word of mouth, newsletter, leaflets, listings. Any corrective measures will be introduced if required.

Qualitative Evaluation

To assess the impact of the project, the following measures will be used:

- Measuring the increase in awareness of canal

heritage and the desire to protect this heritage in the area: At least three focus groups will be convened to discuss and evaluate the project. Participants will include teachers from participating schools, members of the general public, and other stakeholders.

- Increase in positive press coverage of the canal: We will include copies of all press coverage the project receives.
- Ongoing monitoring of the usage of the legacy materials: To evaluate the long-term success of this element and provide information necessary to ensure that it is effectively targeted and marketed.
- Changes in visitor experience: Random samples of visitors to events will be questioned about visitor experience and perceptions of the canal environment. To identify, for example, if people will have greater confidence in personal safety having had positive experiences of the canal environment.





Sustaining the project

sustaining the project

5

Into the Future

British Waterways London is responsible for managing and maintaining the Regent's Canal and will take on the future maintenance responsibility associated with this HLF bid – in particular the Interpretation Focus Points.

Considered from a wider perspective British Waterways London recognises the importance of developing a greater awareness, enjoyment and appreciation of the Regent's Canal as a means of helping to conserve and protect its heritage and environment value for future generations to enjoy.

A particular aim of the bid is to stimulate an interest in the Regent's Canal by local communities, generating a sense of pride, value and ownership.

There are many different communities along the length of the canal and links are better established with some groups than with others.

British Waterways London will continue to encourage and support groups such as The Friends of Regent's Canal as an important link between local communities and British Waterways London, and to encourage local people to engage with the canal through initiatives such as Adopt a Canal schemes.

There will be continued effort in complementary initiatives to promote the canal for wider use by visitors, local communities and other users and also in the

implementation of environmental improvements. For example access and towpath works, safety improvement projects and landscape schemes.

Whilst all those involved in the preparation of this bid hope that it is successful, there is a recognition that the process of working together and developing the bid has been a valuable and worthwhile exercise, which in itself is leading to a greater focus on issues and opportunities which have benefits for the Regent's Canal and those who visit and enjoy it.



supporting information

the Regent's Canal story

chapter one - features of significance

sites for interpretation focus points

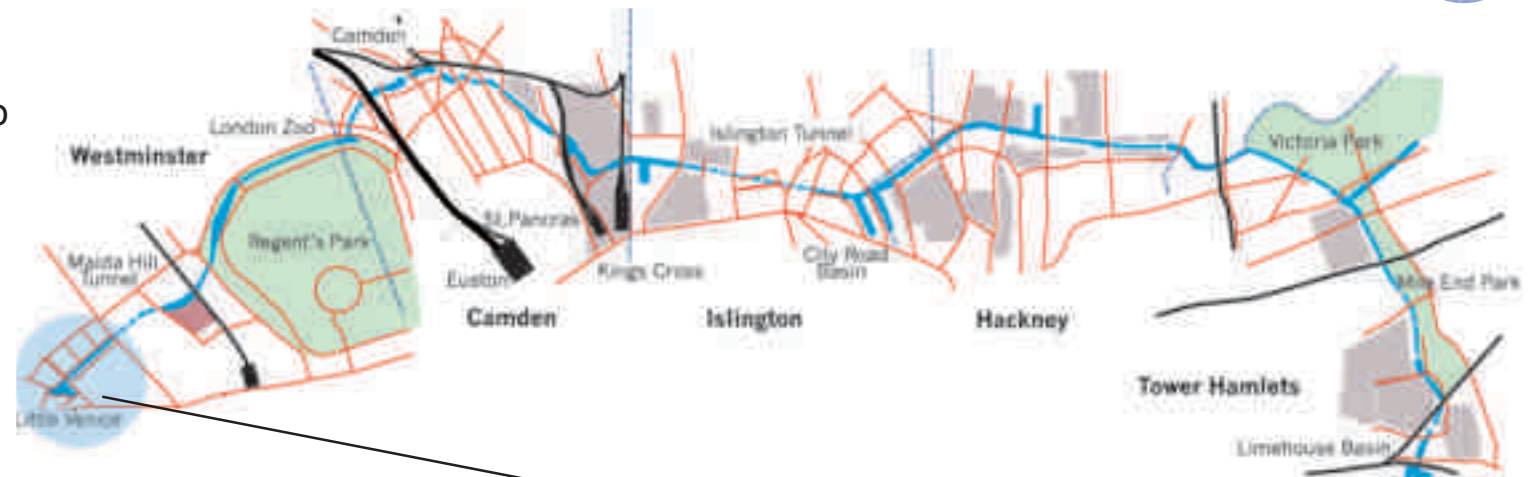
Introduction To The Regent's

the Regent's Canal story

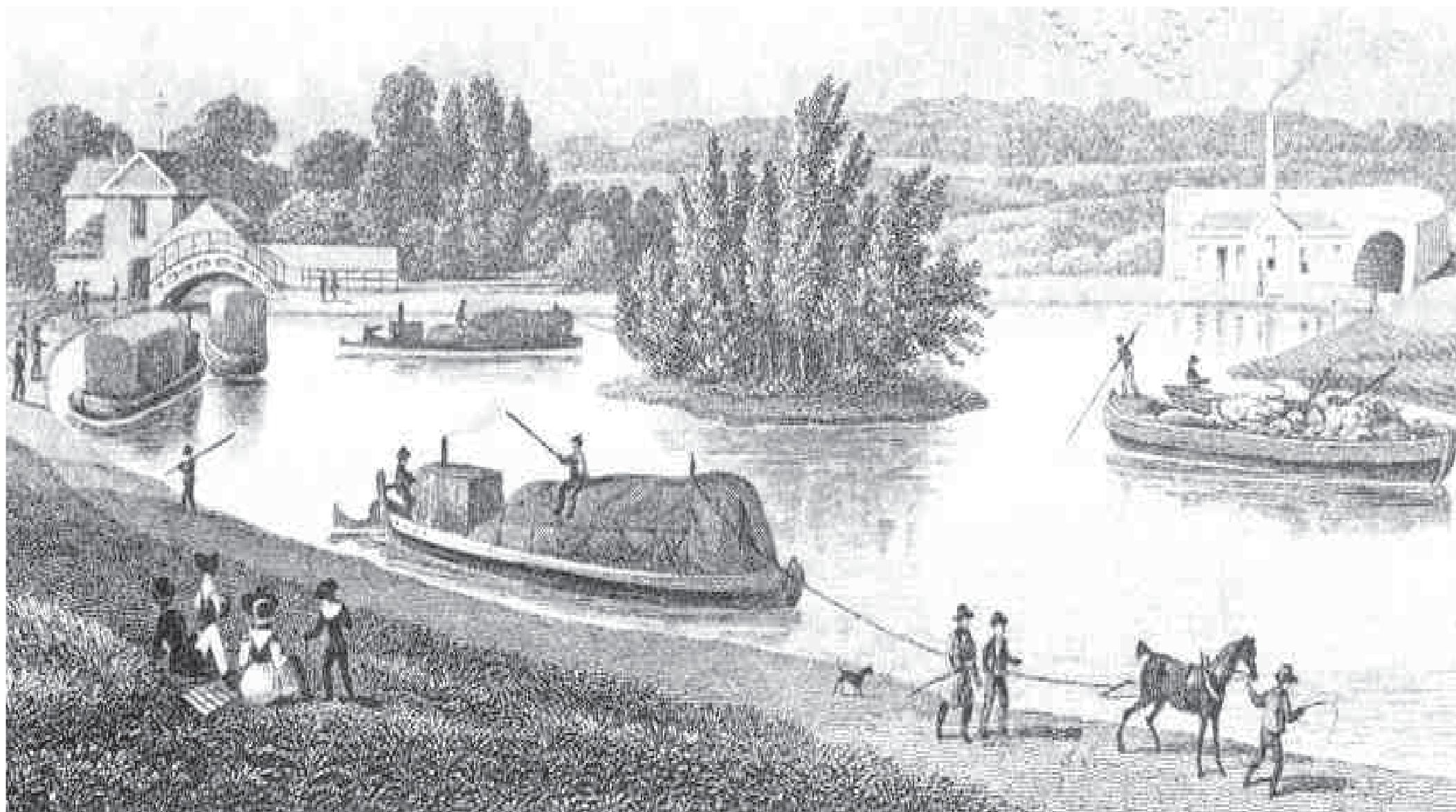
6.1

The Regent's Canal is just over eight miles long and was built between 1812 and 1820 by the engineer of James Morgan. It was dug by hand from a branch of the Grand Junction Canal at Little Venice, down about 90 feet and 12 locks to the Regent's Canal Dock on the River Thames, now Limehouse Basin. The canal ran through the fields around what was then the edge of built-up London.

The architect John Nash was involved at an early stage and it was through his friendship with the Prince Regent that the Prince agreed to give his title to the canal. The building of the canal did not go smoothly however, with tales of landowner dissent, worker fatalities and embezzlement of funds along the way.



Little Venice:
Location for 'Introduction to the
Regent's Canal' sign



Main: Little Venice c.1820
Below: Warwick Avenue Bridge
with crest



Cutting Edge

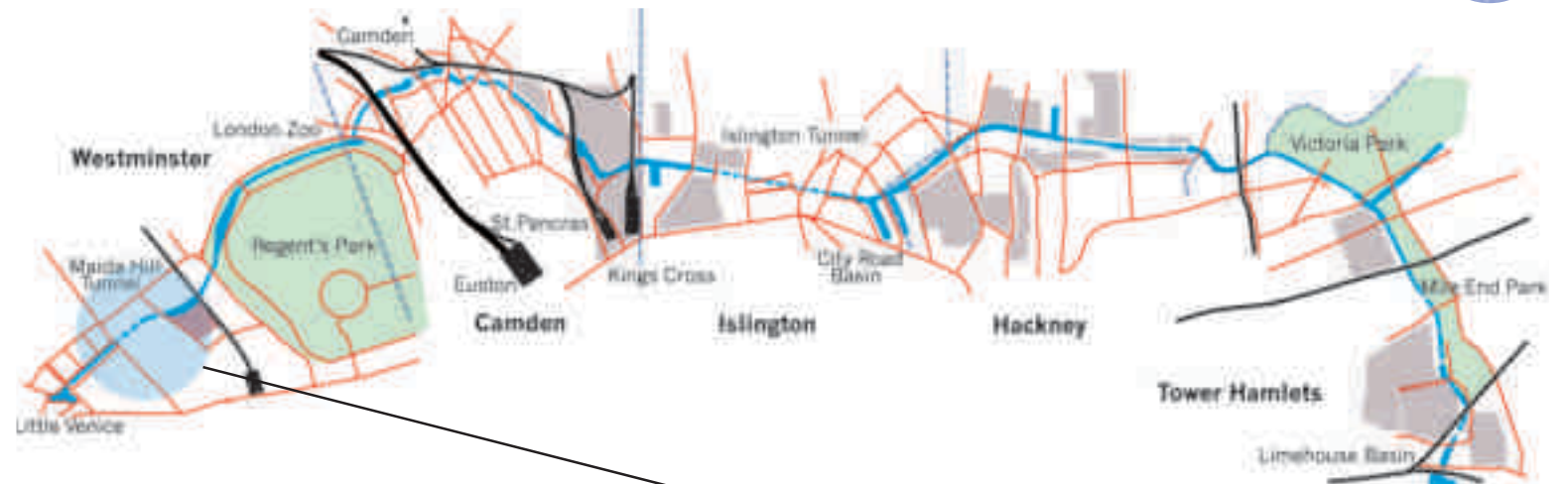
the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Along this stretch the land is much higher than at Limehouse Basin. Evidence of this can be seen in the deep walls along the side of the towpath.

Building the Maida Tunnel was a fraught process as a tunnel at Highgate had collapsed previously. This led to a competition for a revised scheme. Unfortunately, none of the schemes were suitable and the final design was executed by the engineer Morgan. There were still problems encountered on site which caused delays, additional expense and serious casualties.

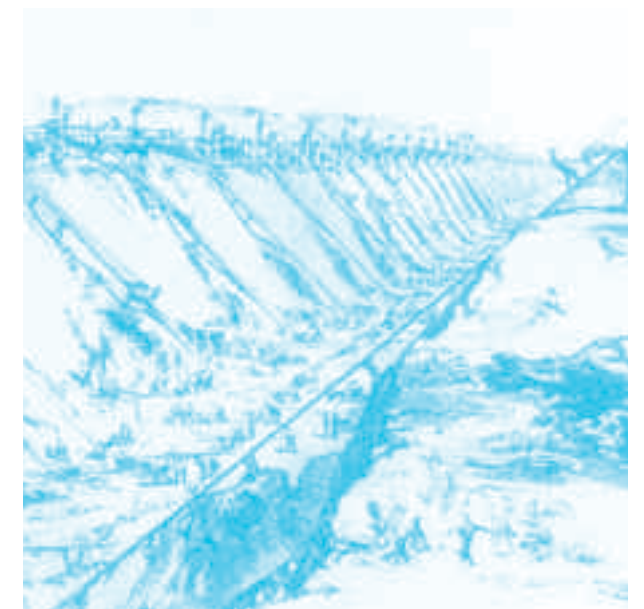
This section of the canal could be enlivened with interpretation of the deep walls and stories of the difficult life of a 'navvie'.



between the Maida Hill Tunnel and
Lisson Grove Estate



Navigators building the canal.



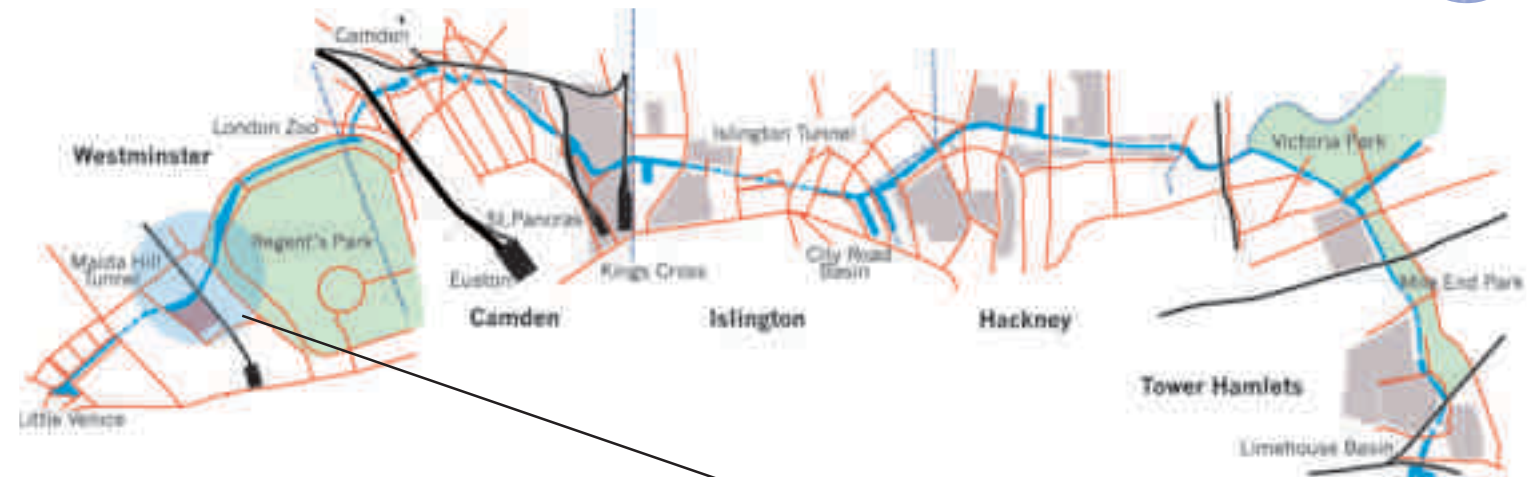
Boat Life

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Here is the largest number of permanent moorings along the canal. It is an opportunity to look at the design of narrowboats and the way of life for boat working families of the industrial age.

Boat people spoke in unfamiliar dialects and wore clothing that was different to many Londoners. They developed their own traditions - for instance decorating the boats and canalwares. Canal children were brought up in cramped conditions with little room to sleep or play and they rarely went to school. A school boat was established in London to improve their education.



alongside Lisson Grove Estate



Photograph of a Boat-workers family 1906



Regent's Park

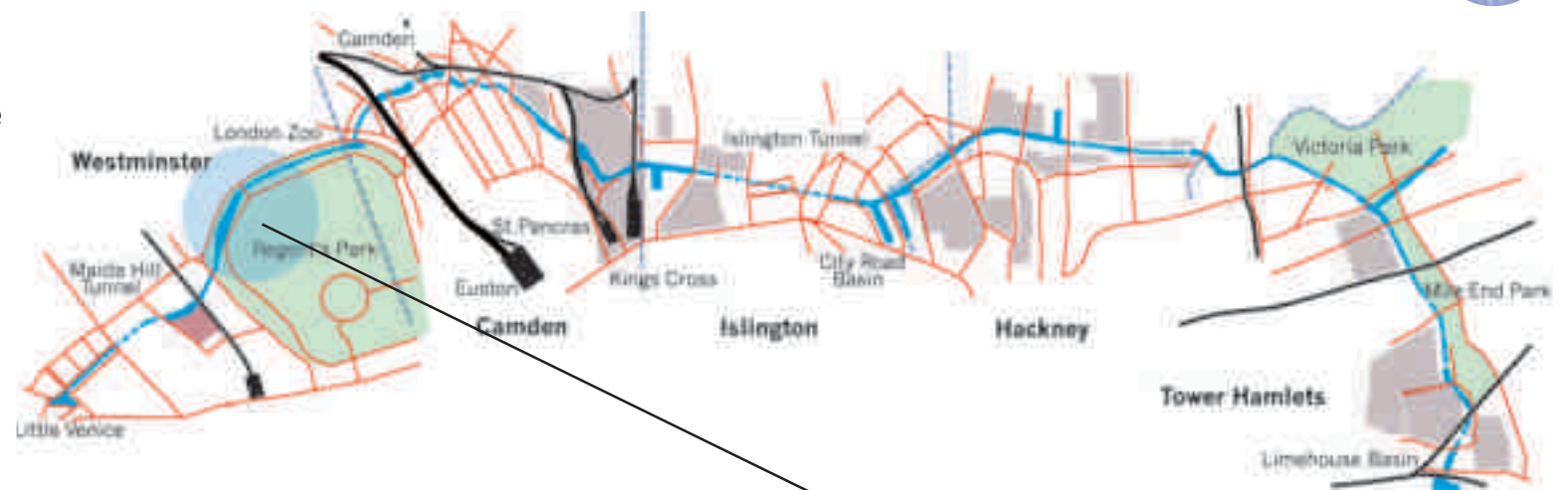
the Regent's Canal story

6.1

The architect John Nash won the competition to design the park in 1811. The land formerly known as Marylebone park had been leased to the Duke of Portland but this expired in 1810, which was a key factor in the building of the canal.

Thomas Homer, the canal's original pioneer, asked Nash to include the canal in the park scheme who was delighted with the idea. Nash named the park and the canal after his friend the Prince Regent.

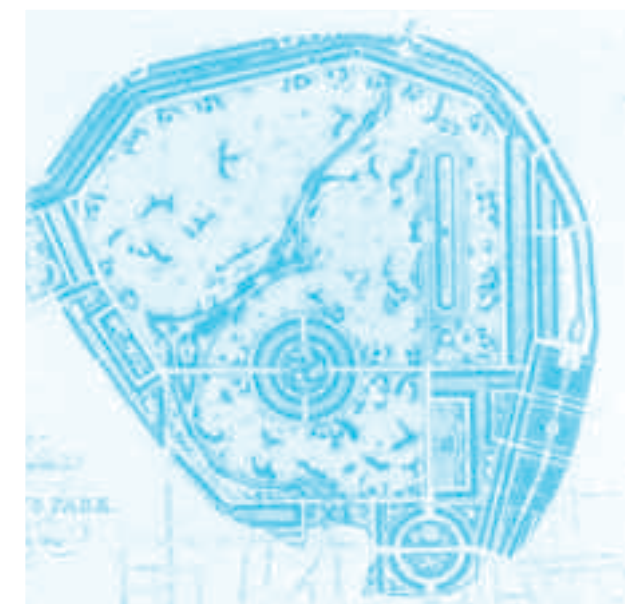
There is currently no facility on site to learn about the significance of the park to the canal nor about the importance of parks in town planning.



Regent's Park



Top inset: Prince Regent
Lower inset: John Nash
Below: Early design for Regent's Park

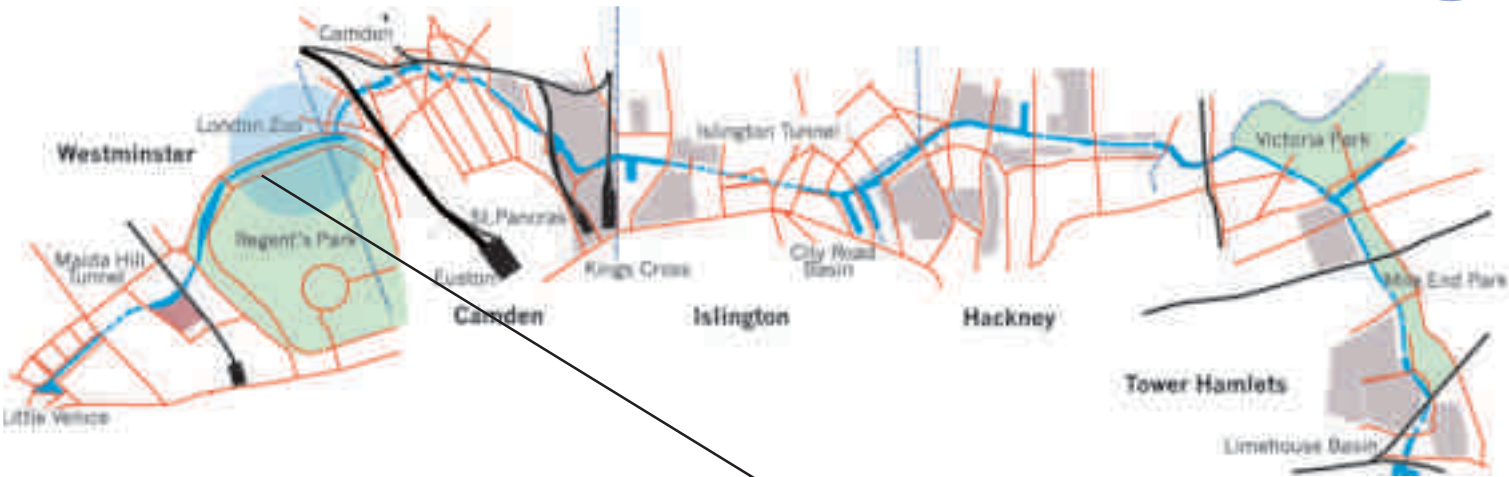


Unusual Animals

On walking along the towpath through Regent's Park, the impressive Snowdon Aviary comes into view. Here is London Zoo which was opened in 1828. Interest in exotic animals grew in the nineteenth century as Britain increased its empire around the world. The zoo was innovative in opening the first reptile house in 1849, the first public aquarium in 1853 and the first insect house in 1881.

Today the zoo houses around 12,000 animals from many countries. Innovation was also key to the design of their enclosures, for instance the Penguin Pool by Berthold Lubetkin which is grade I listed and the dynamic Snowdon Aviary - grade II listed.

Passing by the zoo, there are interesting sounds and glimpses of unusual animals. Here is an opportunity to highlight the leisure interests of the nineteenth century and consider how novel this experience was in its day.



London Zoo



Left: Waterbus stop at the zoo entrance

Snowdon Aviary



Polar bear at London Zoo



The Regency House

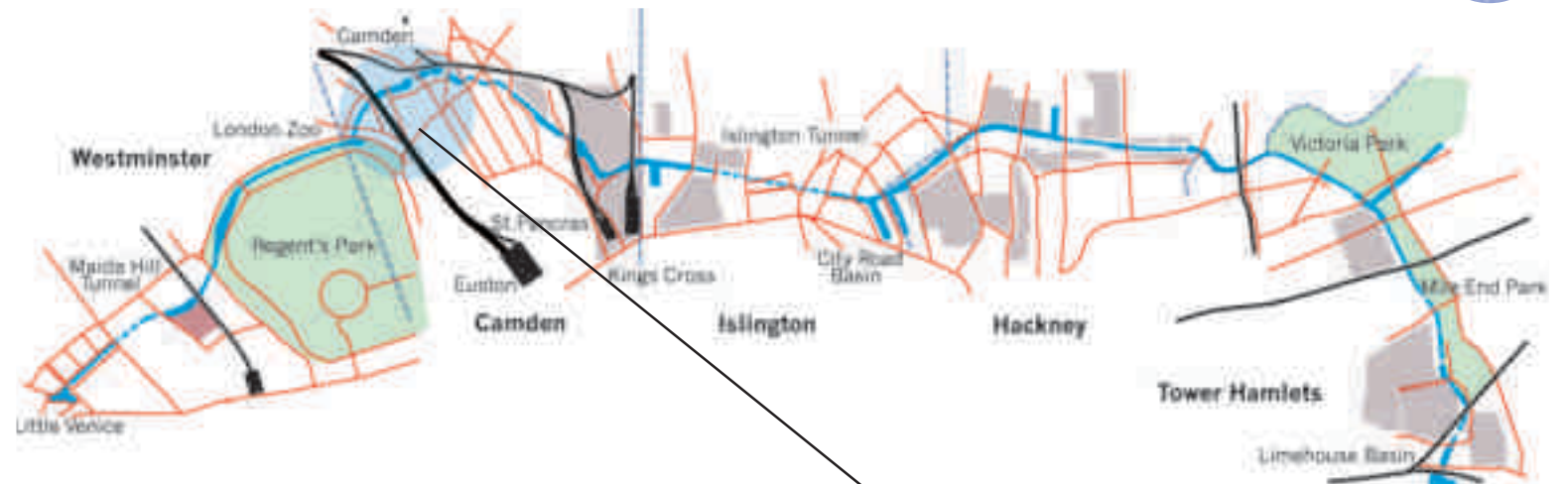
the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Between the zoo and Camden locks, the canal passes through a part of Primrose Hill with impressive Regency houses lining the route. There is an attractive vista beyond a weeping willow of a stuccoed white villa set against the backdrop of St. Mark's Church spire.

Some of the early residents of these houses objected to the canal's construction as they perceived the canal as a dirty, smelly watercourse which would bring diseases and 'undesirable' people through their area. This led to the canal being set below the level of the gardens, hidden from view.

Here is a chance to focus on the design of Regency houses and explore the domestic lives of their original occupants.



between the zoo and Camden Town.



Regency houses along the canal



Goods To Market

In Camden there is a vibrant market and shopping street close to the canal. This attracts a lot of tourists and young people. Here is an opportunity to introduce visitors to the canal and to interpret how goods were brought along the canal to the market. Comparison can be made between the goods found in the shops today and the fashions during the Regency era.



Camden Locks Market



Some transportation companies like Pickfords expanded through the success of the canal and are still operating today.



Top Inset: Pickfords barge
Below: Barge delivering goods



Locks On The Regent's

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Through Camden there are three sets of double locks. Altogether there are 12 locks on the Regent's Canal. They accommodate the change in level of 90 feet from Little Venice down to Limehouse Basin.

These locks use up a lot of water and techniques had to be sought for re-supplying the canal. Other innovative lock types were considered like Congreve's hydro-pneumatic double balance lock which was intended to save water, but this was unsuccessful.

Eventually, feeder reservoirs were established to supply the canal and water is also taken from the Grand Union canal to which it joins.



Hampstead, Hawley and Kentish Town Locks in Camden



Inset: Early lock design
Below: Hampstead lock



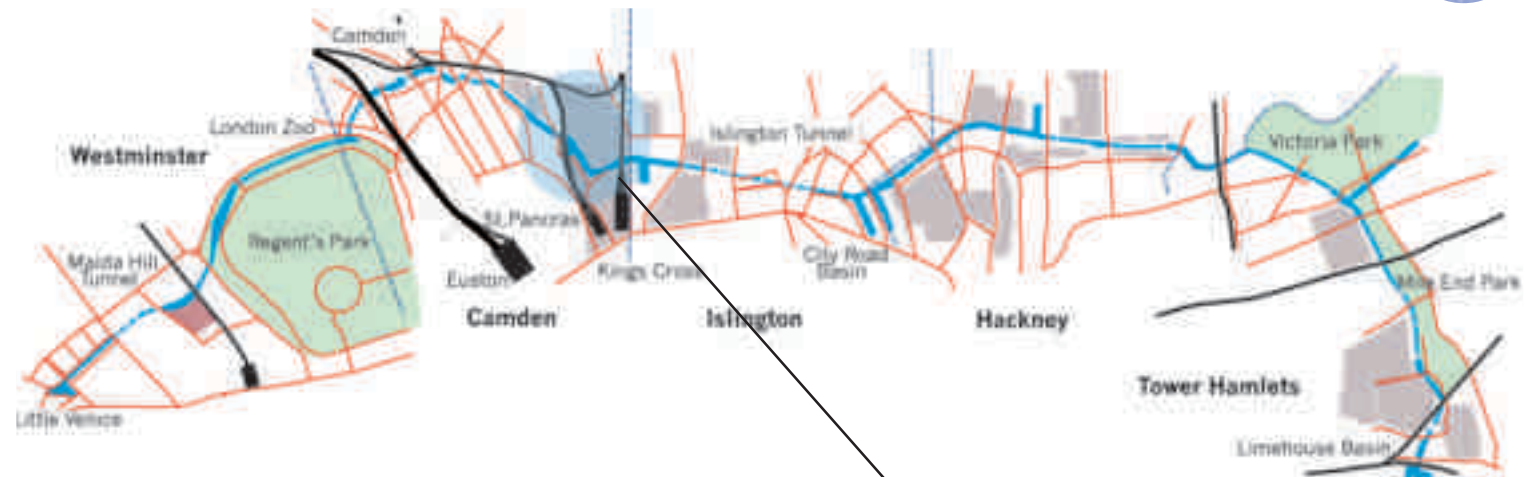
Rail on the Regent's

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

The Birmingham to London Railway opened in 1837 which posed a serious threat to the viability of the canal. The arrival of the Great Northern Railway at Kings Cross and the midland railway at St Pancras added further strain to the finances of the canal even though the two systems worked in parallel for many years and indeed, the canal was critical to the siting of the stations.

by the early twentieth century, the underground rail network had become an essential part of passenger transportation. During the world wars, stop locks were fitted to the canal for de-watering the stretch over the underground. This was to prevent the network being flooded should the canal be bombed. Remains of these can still be seen, although there is currently no explanation for them on site.



St Pancras and King's Cross area.



Main image: Old view St Pancras Station

Inset: St Pancras today

Below: remains of a stop lock



Hazardous Tunnels

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Islington Tunnel is 875 metres long and about 60 feet below the highest ground level. It was designed by James Morgan after an unsuccessful competition to select a scheme.

There is no towpath so boats had to be 'legged' through the tunnel by workers waiting on the banks. This was poorly paid and often dangerous work. The horse was led above using a series of ground plaques as a guide, some of which are still in place today. New plaques have also been fitted in recent years showing the pedestrian route through a modern housing estate.

Near the tunnel is a horse ramp, of which there are several along the canal. These were for pulling horses out of the canal after falling in.



Islington Tunnel



Main image: Tunnel Portal.
Inset: Existing ground plaque and horse ramp cutting.
Below: Legging through the tunnel.



Lockhouse to Penthouse

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

During the period of the canal's decline from around the 1950's to 1970's, many buildings along its banks were derelict and the area was polluted and unsafe. However, the housing boom of the 1980's started a revival in waterfront development leading to regeneration of basins and wharfs.

This can be seen at City Road Basin, where refurbished mills and lock cottages stand alongside modern apartments. It is also evident in Camden and at Limehouse basin. These designs embrace the canal rather than turning their backs to it.

Here is an opportunity to explore changes in housing styles and attitudes to the canal.



City Road Basin



Main image: Modern apartments
Top Inset: Apartments by Norman Foster Associates
Lower inset: Lock cottage
Below: A polluted basin



Famous Faces

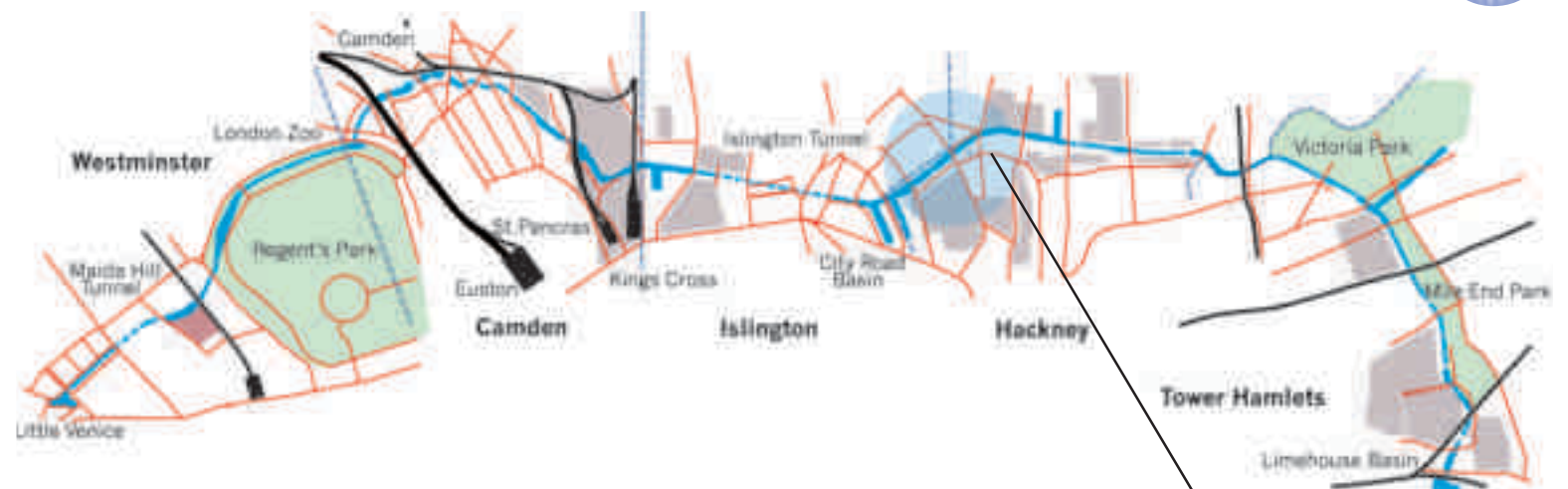
In 1919, a former power station on the banks of the canal in Hackney was transformed into Hollywood's main British base. In 1924, independent film makers bought the building and the legendary Gainsborough Film Studios were born.

Local people were used as extras alongside famous names from Alfred Hitchcock to Noel Coward to Gracie Fields. Today, the site is being developed into flats with a restaurant, sculpture court and a new working film studio.

There are other creative media connections along the canal with the TVAM building at Camden and the Holborn photographic studios near Sturts Lock.

the Regent's Canal story

6.1



Gainsborough Studios



Main: Gainsborough Studios
Left: Noel Coward
Below: Gainsborough Studios



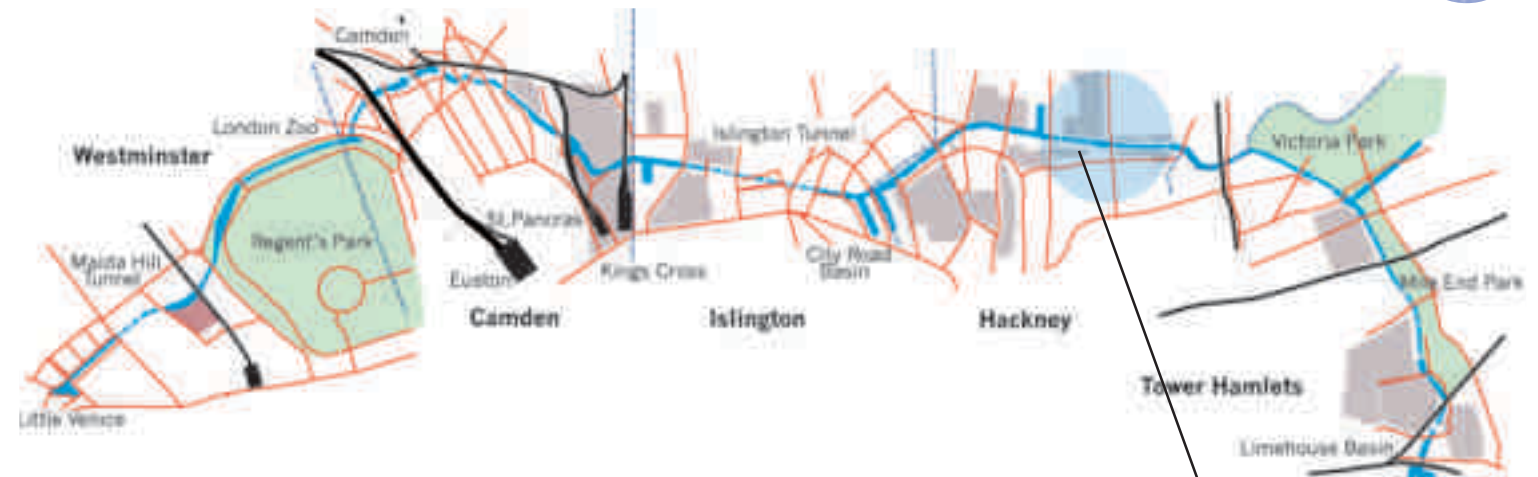
Fuelling the Growth

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

There are several gasometers along the Regent's canal, near King's Cross and Hackney. They are dynamic reminders of London's industrial past.

The canal and railway was key to the location of the Imperial Gas Light and Coke Company who took advantage of the coal brought in on barges from the north of England. In turn, King's Cross used their gas to light their huge goods sheds.



Gasometers in Hackney



Main: Gasometers
Below: Essian St Gasworks



Parks For The People

the Regent's Canal story

6.1

Whilst Regent's Park was intended as a park for the local upper classes, Victoria Park is a park for the people. It is London's oldest municipal park, completed in 1845 by James Pennethorne - said to be an adopted son of Nash.

Mile End Park, recently completed with assistance from the National Lottery, is also a park of the people, but is set out in a modern contemporary style, contrasting with the formal promenades of Victoria Park. This park was created out of wasteland leftover after the East End suffered considerable bombing during the World Wars.

Both parks and canal fringes are rich in natural heritage and biodiversity, which British Waterways is actively encouraging. Only a few miles from the heart of London, this stretch has a peaceful, rural feel.



Victoria and Mile End Park



Main: biodiversity along the canal
Below: Bonner Hall Bridge



Industrial Reminders

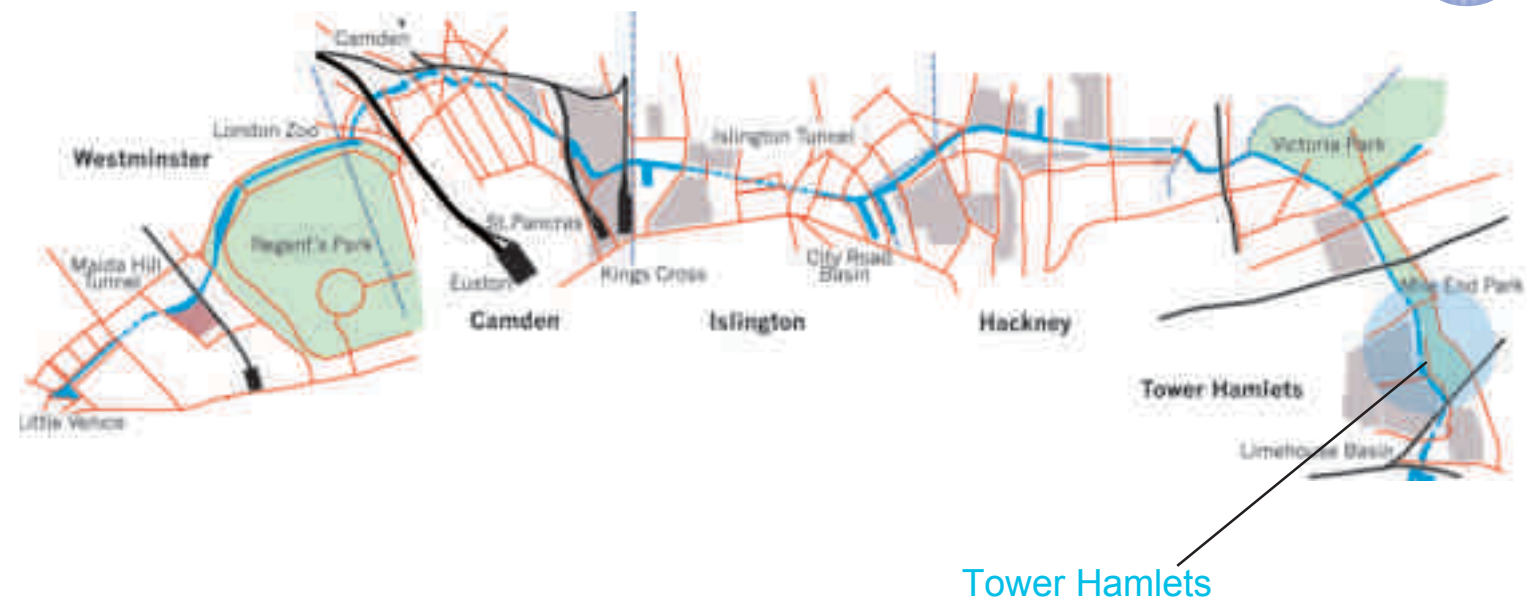
the Regent's Canal story

6.1

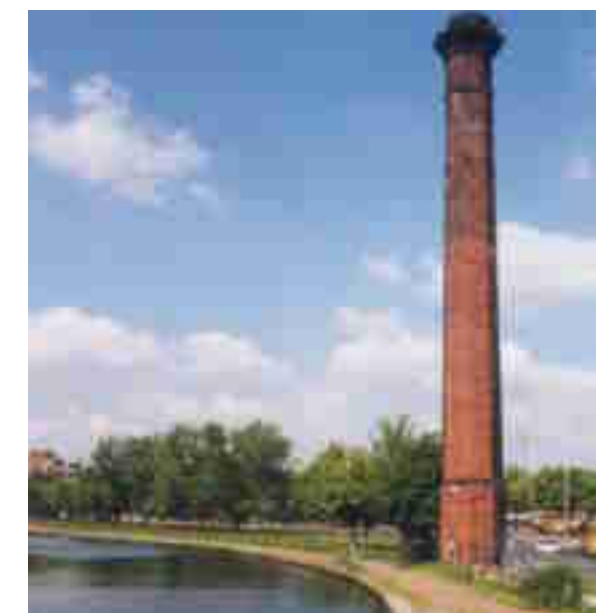
On walking along the stretch through the borough of Tower Hamlets, the feel of the canal is less built up and more residential.

There are clear reminders of the area's industrial past, for instance the brick chimney near a series of railway viaduct arches. This view contrasted against the backdrop of Canary Wharf - a shining example of post industrial regeneration.

These areas have been through many eras of redevelopment and look quite fragmented, yet the rich social history - evident in place names as well as physical relics- ties the fragments together from the workhouses of the Victorian era to the diverse ethnic population of today. This is an opportunity to engage the local community with their own past.



*Above: Towers of pre and post industrial Britain juxtaposed.
Below: Industrial chimney*



supporting information

the Regent's Canal story

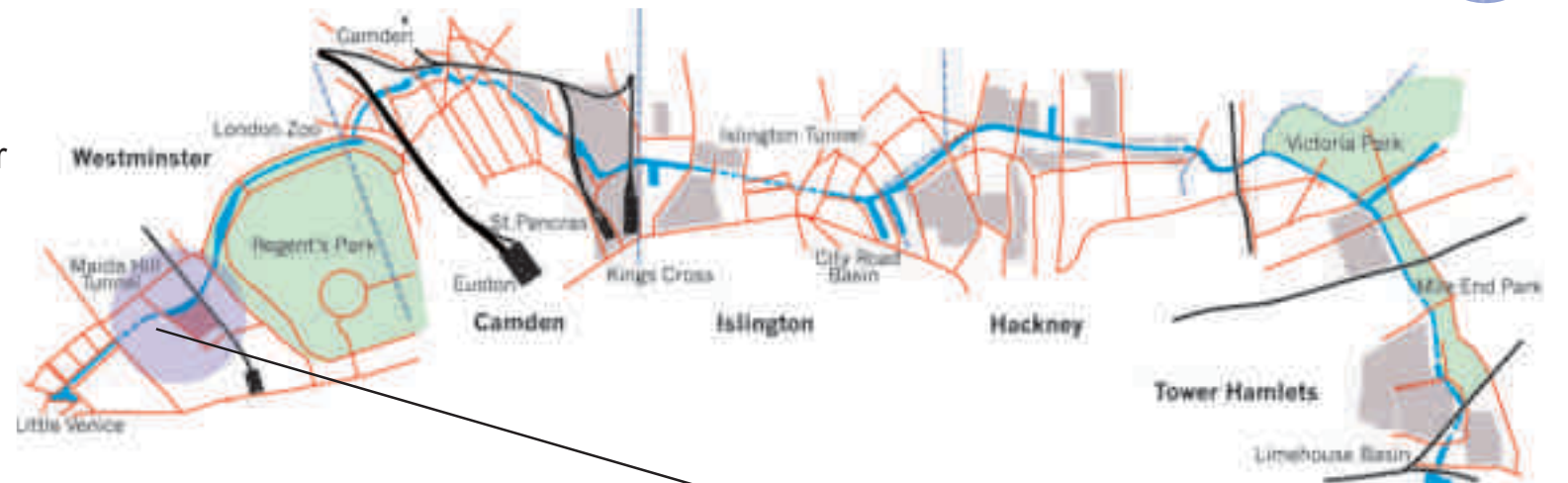
chapter two - bridges of significance

sites for interpretation focus points

Lisson Grove Bridge

Lisson Grove bridge is also known as Eyre's Tunnel, as it passed through Eyre's estate. The tunnel is 48 metres long. It is an interesting bridge as it contains a former toll house, straddling the water. The house is sometimes referred to as the 'upside-down house' as the street entrance is on the upper storey.

The access slope adjacent to the house was originally used by the horses that pulled the barges to reach the towpath and is now a pedestrian access.



Lisson Grove Bridge



Horse pulling a barge



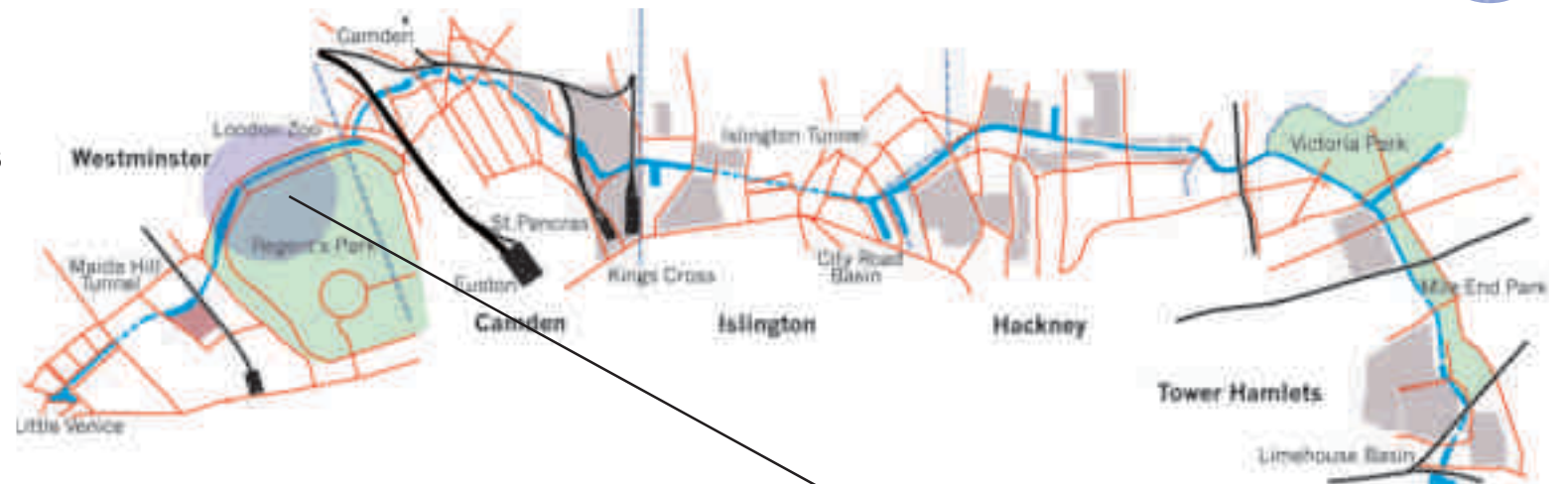
Macclesfield Bridge

the Regent's Canal story

6.2

Named after the Earl of Macclesfield, Chairman of the Regent's Canal Company at its opening in 1820. The bridge is probably the most famous in British Canal history after a barge carrying gunpowder exploded beneath it in 1874. Bricks and mortar were blasted far and wide. The keel of the boat was discovered in a nearby basement having fallen through the roof.

This event earned it the nickname of 'Blow up Bridge'. The original columns were re-used during reconstruction. On the heads of the columns is written 'Coalbrookdale' a location known for its iron products.



Macclesfield Bridge



'Blow - Up Bridge'



Cumberland Footbridge

This footbridge crosses Cumberland basin which was originally a junction with the Regent's Canal and a branch that led $\frac{3}{4}$ mile through the park to Cumberland Hay Market. This arm was filled in 1948 with war rubble and the site became part of the zoo. The bridge is grade II listed.

There are several attractive bridges in Regent's park. They are unusual as they display examples of polite architecture rather than canal vernacular. This is evident in their decorative iron railings and abutments. Primrose Hill bridge and the Inner zoo footbridge are also grade II listed.



Cumberland Footbridge

Left: Attractive bridges in the Regent's Park stretch.

Below: Old map of Regent's Park



Dead Dog Basin Footbridge

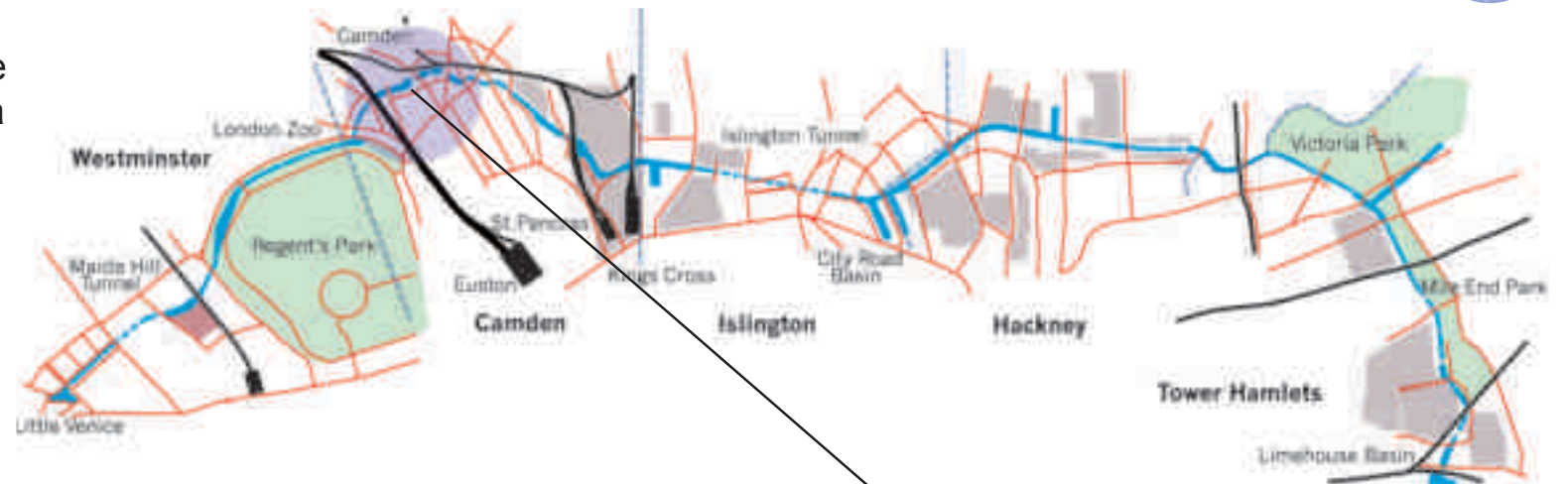
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This grade II listed footbridge is over the entrance leading to Dead Dog Basin. Grooves have been worn into the iron handrail by ropes used to guide the horses that pulled the barges. The Basin within the warehouse met with a railway interchange at ground level. There are hatches in the floors for lifting goods between boat and rail.

There is a large network of underground storage vaults – the Camden Catecombs - leading from the basin. They were used extensively during the Regency and Victorian eras for storing wine and ale, but are now disused and forgotten.

The name Dead Dog Basin is said to have come from the fee that young men could earn fishing dead animals out of the basin. Apparently, after receiving their payment, they would secretly throw the animal back so they could get paid again!



Dead Dog Basin Footbridge



Hampstead Locks opposite the basin



North Road Bridge

This bridge carried one of the major routes out of London leading to the A1. The A1 was formerly the 'Great North Road' built by the Romans and leading to the north of England.

The bridge is Grade II listed. Grooves can be seen in the iron edgings to many of the brick arched bridges along this stretch. They are caused by the ropes used to guide the horses that pulled the barges.



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North Road Bridge



Major Roman Roads



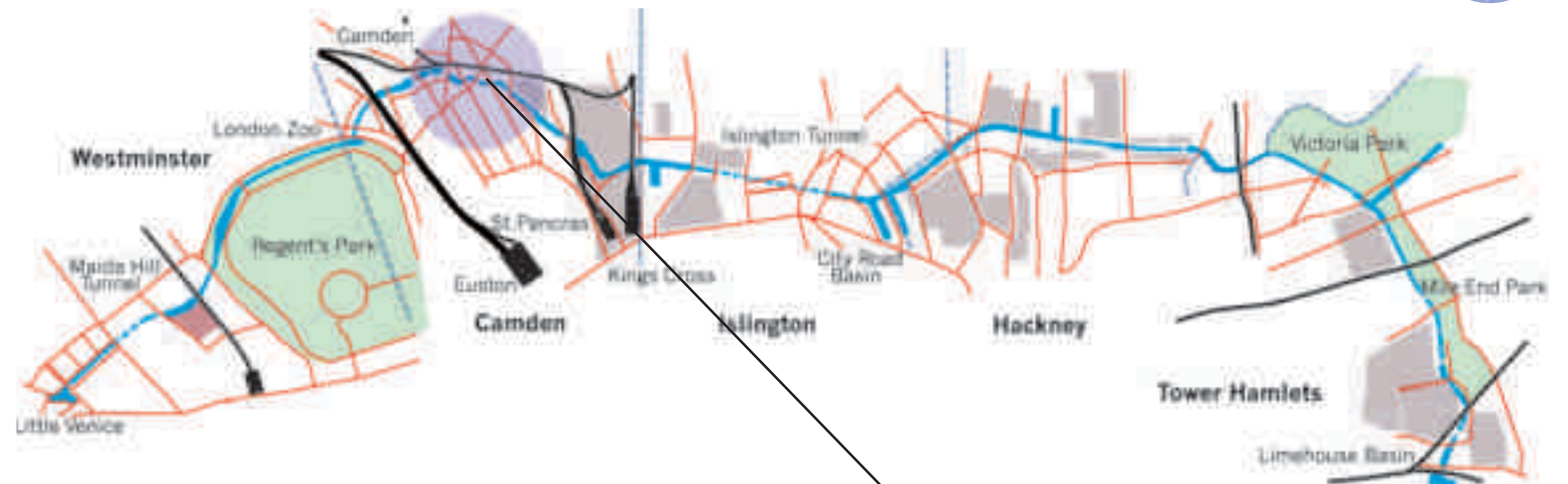
Grays Inn Bridge

Near High Holborn meaning 'Hole Bourne' where a stream flowed into the Fleet River, Grays Inn bridge is named after the place where the legal institution of Grays Inn was founded. This law society is now one of the Inns of Court to which barristers must belong.

'This certain Inn at Portpole', as it was referred to in records dated 1539, originates from the manor house of the de Grey family near to the old boundary of the City of London at Holborn Bar. It was then known as the Manor of Portpole. Many members of the de Grey family had an association with law dating as far back as Walter de Grey who was Lord Chancellor in 1206-14.

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Grays Inn Bridge



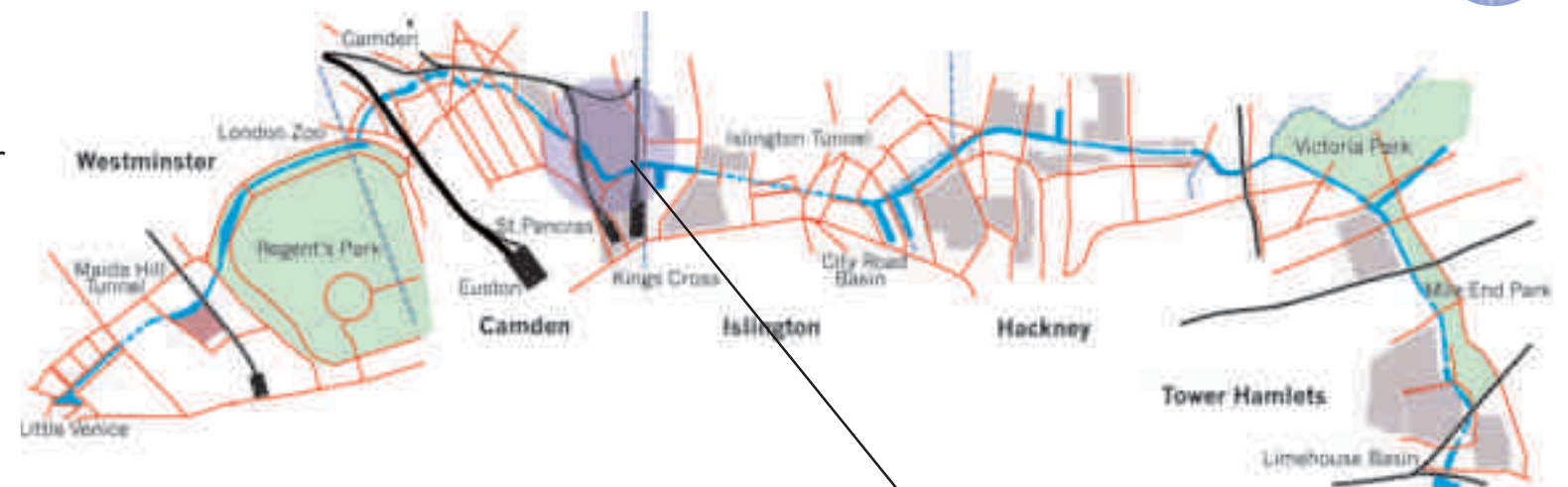
Grays Inn Society crest



Maiden Lane Bridge

The name of this bridge is said to be derived from 'Muddy Lane' as it was described in 1593 as 'the old auncient high waie to high Bernet from Portepoole, now Grayes Inne... This auncient way, was refused of wayfaring men and carriers by reason of the deepness and dirtie passage in the winter season. However, it is more likely to have come from the 'Middens' or slags heaps that were described by Charles Dickens. The road has also been called Black Dog Lane, Brecknock Road, then York Way.

The bridge - first built in 1819 - has been widened and rebuilt three times since. Several other bridges along the Regent's Canal have been rebuilt, sometimes retaining their earlier abutments.



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Maiden Lane Bridge



St Pancras Railway Station



Whitmore Bridge

One of the original canal bridges, built around 1820. Named after Sir George Whitmore who was Lord Mayor of London. Whitmore built an impressive residence to the north of the canal. It had a moat with a draw bridge and picturesque gardens, but later fell into disrepair and was demolished.

On the edges of the bridge are grooves which have made by ropes used to guide the horses that pulled the barges.

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Whitmore Bridge



Example of rope marks



Cat and Mutton Bridge

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This bridge is named after the Cat and Mutton pub which once stood on Mutton Lane. The 'cat' is thought to have been an abbreviation of the word 'cattle' as sheep and cows were brought to the nearby market.

The Cat and Mutton pub was said to have two signs outside which read:
'Pray, Puss, do not tare, Because the Mutton is so rare'
'Pray, Puss, do not claw, Because the Mutton is so raw'.



Bonner Hall Bridge

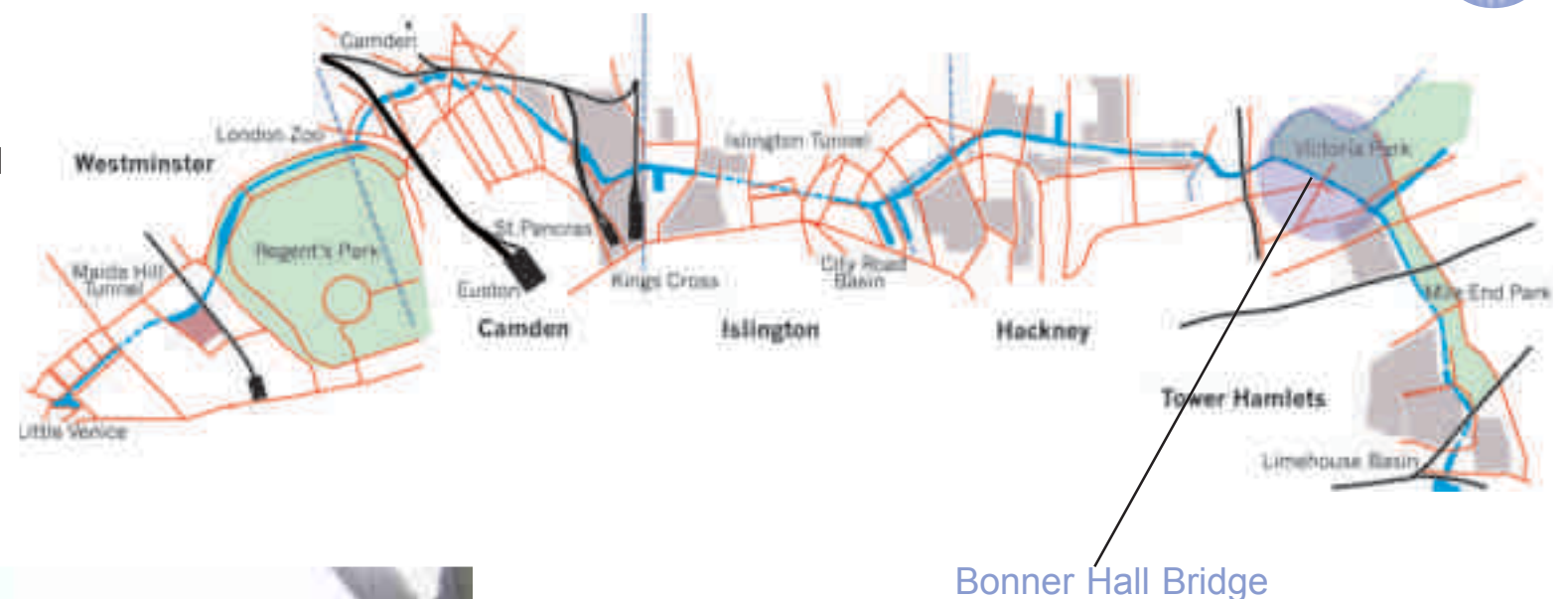
This beautiful bridge is one of the main entrances into Victoria Park – London’s oldest municipal park, completed in 1845. It is near to Bonner Road and Bishop’s Way. The canal route passed through land which was known as ‘Bishop Bonner’s Fields’ where the house of Bishop Bonner stood during Henry VIII’s reign.

It was written that ‘Edward Boner, doctor of the civil law, archdeacon of Leicester... was elected to London in the year 1539.’ However, Bonner was a very popular man who ‘exercised his tyrannical and cruel sway’ and was ‘the sworn enemy of protestants’.



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Nineteenth century map showing Bonner Hall.



Twig Folly Bridge

This bridge carrying 'Roman Road' derives its name from a street near the canal called Twig Folly in Bethnal Green. It is mentioned in an article about poverty in the London Illustrated News, published in 24th October 1863: 'the owners of the putrid sties in the purlieus of Friars-mount, in Thorold-square, in Twig-folly, and other centres of pestilence may well believe that neither board, nor commission, nor sanitary officer will trouble them if they can only let inquiry itself die, and so contrive to hush up the whole matter...'

Bethnal Green was quite a picturesque area when the canal was built, but the success of the canal helped to bring industry to the area including match works and silk weavers dwellings. Before long, the area was overcrowded and inhabited by some of London's poorest occupants. Charles Booth described the area on his map as populated by 'Vicious, semi-criminals'.

Bethnal Green suffered heavy bombing during the war which gave opportunity for slum clearance programmes.



Nineteenth century map showing Twig Folly



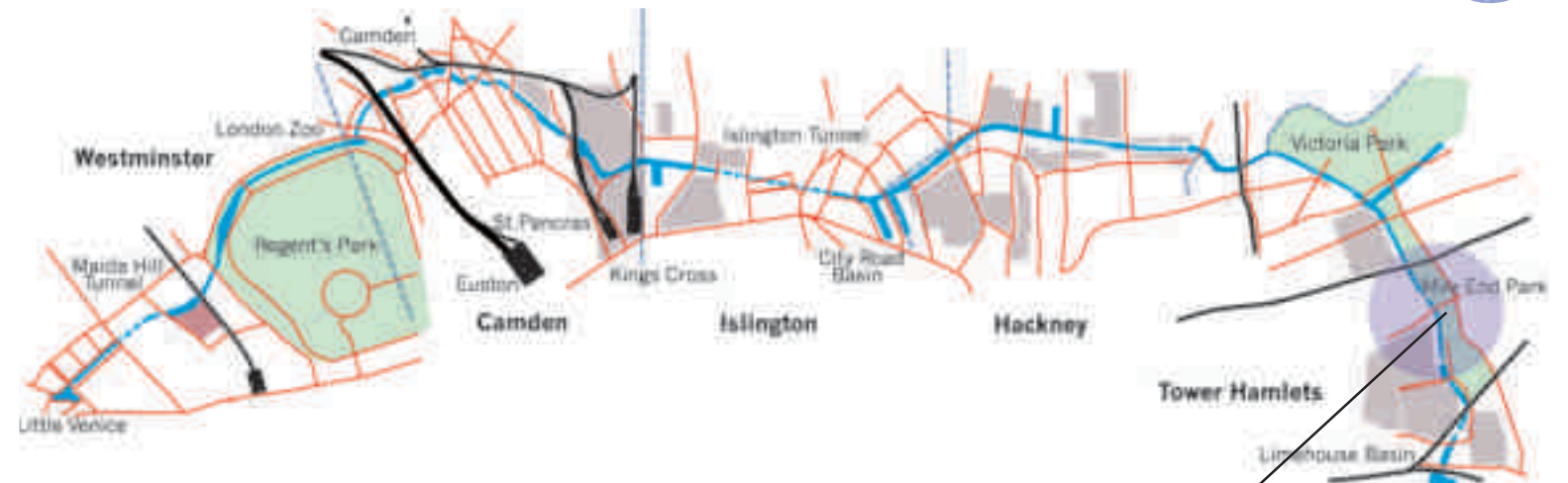
Gunmaker's Arms Bridge

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There is little information about this charming brick arched bridge although it could have been named after a nearby arms store labelled Kings Arms on a nineteenth century map.

The bridge is partly concealed by unappealing steel conduit fitted insensitively in recent times, but the bridge name is part of the historic fabric of this area.



Gunmaker's Arms Bridge



Nineteenth century map showing Kings Arms



Parnham Street Footbridge

This was built for the ancient footpath across Mr Parnham's field – one of the nineteenth century land owners. The path led from Limehouse to St Dustan's Church. On the north side of Parnham Street was a firm called 'Lusty's' who made turtle soup for the Lord Mayor's banquets.

The footbridge is still and essential link across the canal and is due to be rebuilt as part of ongoing improvements to the area.

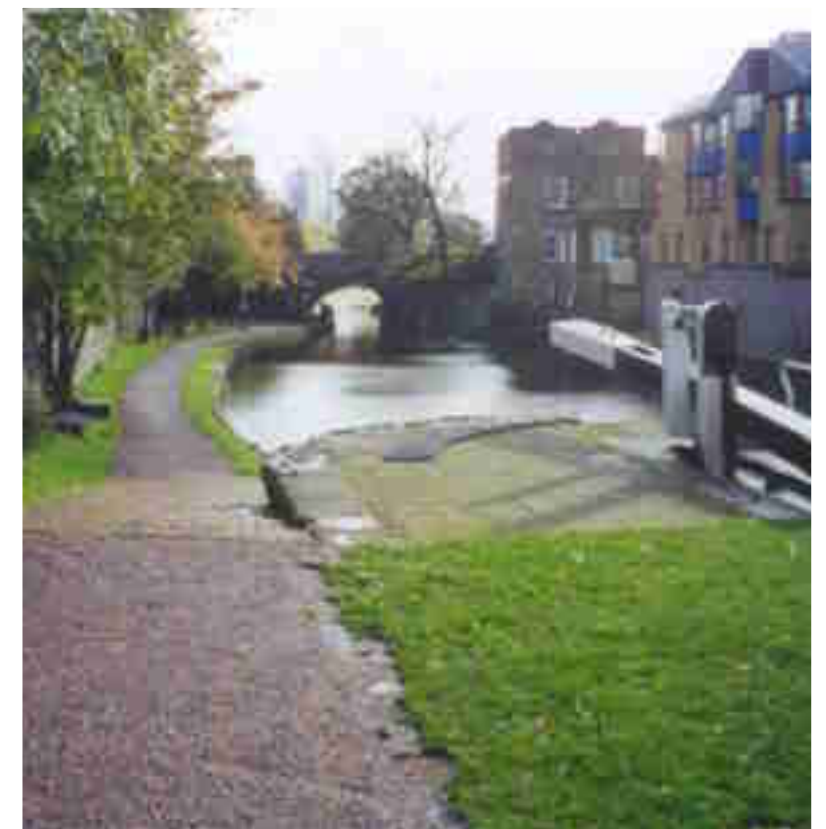


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Parnham St Footbridge



Nearby Johnsons Lock

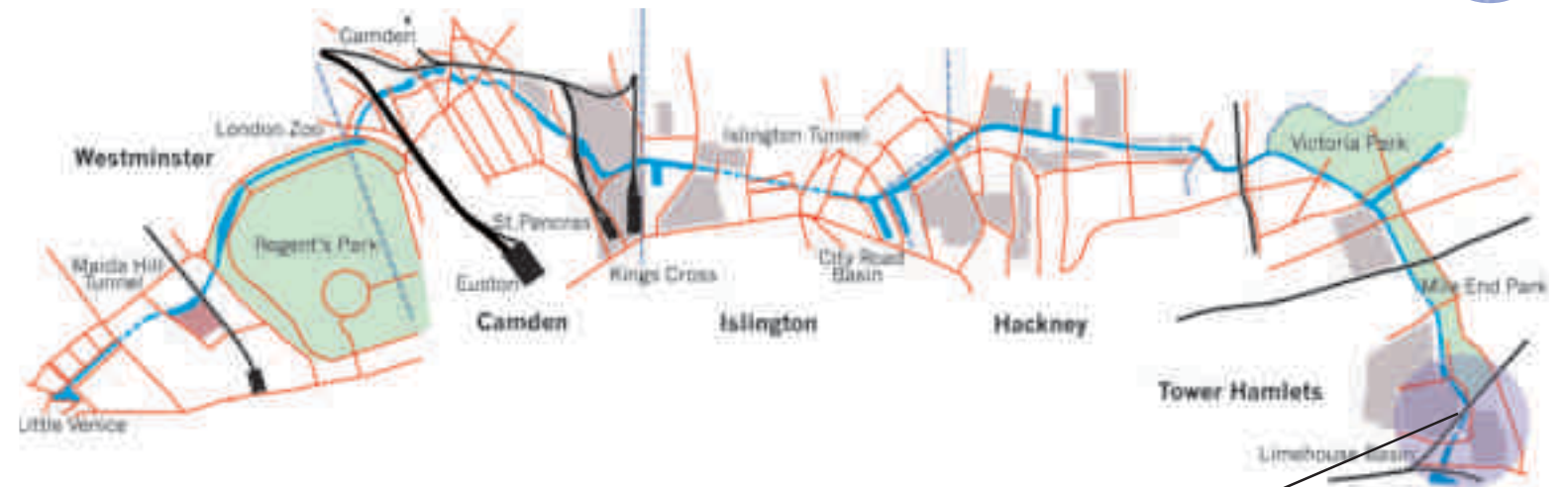


Salmon Lane Bridge

the Regent's Canal story

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This bridge is named after Robert Salmon, a local land owner and Master of Trinity House. He arranged for the City of London to pay for thirty ships to fight the Spanish Armada in 1588.



Salmon Lane Bridge



Rail Bridge At Limehouse Basin

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This graceful rail bridge, extending across the junction with the Regent's canal and Limehouse basin, represents the advent of the railways. Rail travel was much faster than canal transportation and spelt the end of the canal era. Some freight was still carried on canals however even up to the 1950's but then the system started to decay and many mills and wharfs became derelict.

Limehouse basin – once a thriving dock – was suffering blight in the twentieth century. This was until the 1980's when the area was redeveloped during a period of economic boom. It is now an attractive and successful housing development.



Rail Bridge at Limehouse Basin



Ships at Limehouse Basin





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